

An anti-imperialist's
guide to

the
IRISH
WAR

Irish Freedom Movement

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junius

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Introduction

This handbook is for people in Britain who want to end the war in Ireland. For more than 13 years the war has raged in the cities, towns and villages of the Six Counties; its violent intensity has regularly spilled over the border into the Twenty-six Counties and across the sea to Britain. More than 2500 people have died, including more than 600 British soldiers and paramilitary policemen, more than 200 republicans and around 600 Catholic victims of sectarian attacks by Loyalists and British forces. Hundreds of non-combatants have been killed in more than a decade of bombings and shootings, rioting and repression.

One of the reasons why the war has dragged on for so long is the absence of a powerful movement in Britain to stop it. Many people are sympathetic to Ireland's fight for freedom and suspicious of the official propaganda that justifies Britain's continuing occupation. But ignorance and confusion about the Irish War hold back any movement against it. The British media has concealed the truth about events in the Six Counties and obscured the issues at stake in the conflict. British politicians – right, left and centre – have nurtured a consensus that backs up every act of repression in Ireland and marginalises opposition to the war at home.

An anti-imperialist's guide to the Irish War provides people who want to end the war with the information and the arguments they need to counter the papers and the politicians and to win wide support for the cause of Irish freedom. It provides the answers to the questions that come up every time the Irish War is discussed. Why does Britain stay in Ireland? Why don't they just pull the troops out? What about the Protestants? Why can't a political solution work? We examine the Six County state and British strategy during the war to deal with these questions and many more.

This book contains a lot of information and analysis concerning Ireland, but its central focus is Britain. The real problem of the Irish War is the success of the British government in making its behaviour in Ireland acceptable to the vast majority of people at home. Thus we look closely at Britain's use of

political initiatives and the legal process to give its rule in the Six Counties an image of respectability and fairness. We review the use of the law to label as a criminal anybody who opposes Britain's domination over Ireland. The Prevention of Terrorism Act is the extension to Britain of the strategy of attempting to confer legitimacy on the British occupation by criminalising its opponents.

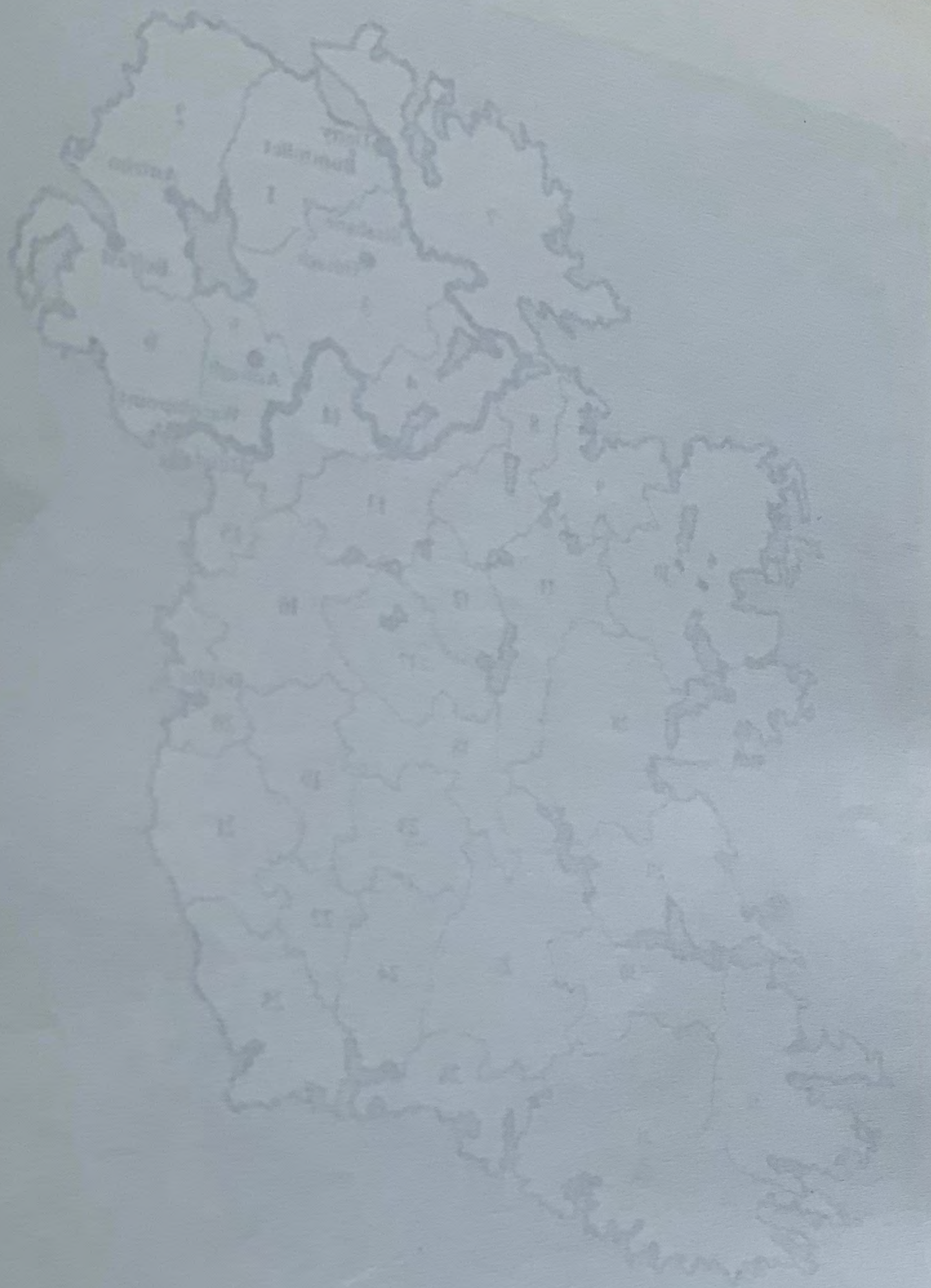
This Irish Freedom Movement handbook is more than a collection of useful facts and figures. It is a guide to action. Hence we include an outline of the way forward for anti-imperialists in Britain in solidarity with the Irish liberation struggle. Our conclusion is that the only way to end the Irish War is by fighting in Britain for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland. If it's your conclusion too, then join the Irish Freedom Movement – see page 138 for details.

Introduction

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|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. Derry | 7. Donegal | 16. Meath | 25. Wexford |
| 2. Antrim | 8. Leitrim | 17. Westmeath | 26. Waterford |
| 3. Tyrone | 9. Sligo | 18. Offaly | 27. Tipperary |
| 4. Fermanagh | 10. Mayo | 19. Kildare | 28. Galway |
| 5. Armagh | 11. Roscommon | 20. Dublin | 29. Clare |
| 6. Down | 12. Longford | 21. Wicklow | 30. Limerick |
| | 13. Cavan | 22. Carlow | 31. Cork |
| | 14. Monaghan | 23. Laoighis | 32. Kerry |
| | 15. Louth | 24. Kilkenny | |



1. Why Britain stays

The relationship between Britain and Ireland continues to be a source of conflict and instability in both countries. The 'Irish Question' has haunted British politics for generations and a solution to the problem seems no nearer than it was one, two, or even three hundred years ago. Indeed, it has become increasingly accepted that Britain has no political answers to the Irish War. Prominent Tory adviser T E Utey warns that 'Ulster could well prove to be the Achilles heel of the next Thatcher administration' (*Daily Telegraph*, 18 February 1983). And Official Unionist deputy leader Harold McCusker predicts that the bloodbath in the Six Counties can only get worse (*Fortnight*, 6 January 1983).

Frustration, despair and fear combine in Britain's portrayal of the war in Ireland as a series of irrational and incomprehensible events. British academics and politicians all emphasise the 'complexity' of the subject as a prelude to warning that there are 'no easy solutions'. The British press has turned distortion of the Irish War into an art; the media denounces the Irish liberation movement, sometimes as 'gangsters' and 'psychopaths', at other times as 'Marxists' or 'religious fanatics'. Why does Ireland generate such hatred and confusion in British political life?

1 The meaning of Partition

The British ruling class has always regarded Ireland as different from its other colonies. Ireland's proximity to Britain has given it a strategic importance greater than that of any other colony. Britain's oldest colony has always been administered differently from its other overseas possessions. Military repression has never been sufficient to subjugate Ireland. This is why Britain, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, took the unprecedented step of politically integrating Ireland into Britain itself. The 1801 Act of Union constitutionally fused Ireland with the British state.

The Act of Union could not, however, solve the Irish problem. The people of Ireland wanted to run their own nation – not to be citizens of Britain.

Although a substantial community of former British settlers in the north east pledged its allegiance to the Crown, support for the British connection in Ireland as a whole remained marginal. From the United Irishmen of the 1790s to the Fenians of the 1860s, national revolt simmered and occasionally exploded. Britain's brutal suppression of the Easter Rising of 1916 only strengthened the determination of the Irish people to rid themselves of their British oppressors. In 1918, in the last election ever held over the whole of Ireland, 80 per cent of the electorate voted for national independence. Less than a year later, open war broke out between the republican movement and the British Army. But this time the British military could not crush the Irish; after two years of bloody war Britain still had no prospect of victory.

The British could not win – but neither could they afford to lose Ireland. The Act of Union meant that rebellion in Ireland was a direct threat to the United Kingdom itself. At the same time, the British Empire feared revolts inspired by Ireland's example in India, Egypt and elsewhere: it had to keep its grip secure on Ireland. Hence, even compromises with the demand for Irish Home Rule, suggested by British politicians, provoked fierce resistance from the state. In March 1914, army officers stationed at the Curragh camp near Dublin rebelled in anticipation of being commanded to enforce the Home Rule Bill. The British Army, Ulster Loyalists and the Conservative Party united to thwart any attempt to weaken the British connection with Ireland. This unprecedented mutiny was not put down – indeed the leading officers were given a pledge that troops 'will not be called upon to enforce the present Home Rule Bill in Ulster' (George Dangerfield, *The damnable question*).

The British authorities faced a seemingly intractable problem. A British withdrawal from Ireland was unthinkable, yet a military victory over the national liberation movement could not be achieved. To resolve this difficulty, Liberal leader Lloyd George came up with a compromise – Partition. The plan involved the division of Ireland into a twenty-six county area with a degree of autonomy and a six county region fully integrated into Britain. A combination of military coercion and diplomatic skulduggery succeeded in pushing Partition through. From Westminster's point of view it appeared to be a perfect formula. Irish demands for national freedom were met by the nominal independence granted to the Irish Free State. And the wishes of the Loyalist majority in the north east were recognised through the careful construction of a separate six county regime.

In fact Partition was no fair and equitable solution. It was the mechanism through which British domination over Ireland *as a whole* could be continued. Partition divided the Irish nationalist movement and split the working class. It enormously strengthened Britain's hand against the Irish people. At the time, both revolutionaries and the establishment understood what Partition would mean. Lloyd George proclaimed that the acceptance of the Partition treaty marked 'the greatest day in the history of the British Empire' (*Dangerfield*). Irish revolutionary James Connolly had warned against the dangers of Partition back in 1914 when the plan was first suggested:

'Such a scheme would destroy the labour movement by disrupting it. It would perpetuate in a form aggravated in evil the discords now prevalent, and help the Home Rule and Orange capitalists and clerics to keep their rallying cries before the public as the political watchword of the day. In short it would make division more intense and confusion of ideas and parties more confounded.' (James Connolly, *Selected Writings*)

Connolly's predictions proved all too true. To this day Ireland has remained divided and confused. Instead of old-style colonialism, Britain erected a facade of democracy to justify its domination.

The unfree state

Partition has been particularly successful in the Twenty-six Counties. The substitution of *indirect* for direct control by Britain has allowed the Dublin state to maintain all the appearances of an independent country. But the Irish capitalist class is too weak to exist as an independent force; its survival depends on the continued division of the working class enforced by Partition.

Successive Dublin governments have attempted to maintain a discreet distance from Britain and proclaim their independence. In 1921 the British collaborators who set up the Twenty-six County regime called it the 'Irish Free State'. In 1949 the Dublin government cut all its institutional ties with Britain and declared the Irish Republic. Labour Prime Minister Clement Attlee cynically dismissed this step as a publicity stunt, telling his Cabinet that Dublin 'laid more store on formal independence than on the Union of Ireland' (*Cabinet minutes*, 12 January 1949). The Irish Republic could renounce the Commonwealth, remove the British Governor-General, join the United Nations and exchange ambassadors around the world. But Ireland as a whole remained under Britain's thumb. As Attlee put it, 'Eire was not in future to be regarded as a foreign country even though she ceased to be part of His Majesty's dominions'.

Nationalist sentiments remain a major influence on the Dublin government, resulting in periodic clashes between the Twenty-six Counties and Britain. Dublin politicians know that anti-British rhetoric often brings electoral dividends. Thus in the November 1982 General Election former Prime Minister Charles Haughey issued a stern warning: 'Britain stay out of our elections' (*Irish Times*, 16 November). However, such rhetorical gestures have never threatened Britain's domination. At the end of the day the Irish ruling class knows that its survival depends on the maintenance of Partition.

Throughout the present war the Dublin government has proved a most reliable ally of the British state. It has relentlessly harassed, hunted down, persecuted and imprisoned republicans. The judiciary in the Twenty-six Counties allows the trial of republicans for offences committed in Britain. The 1982 trial and incarceration in Dublin of Gerry Tuite for bombing offences committed in London shows up how independent the Irish Republic really is from Britain. The security forces of the Twenty-six Counties regularly liaise and co-operate with the British Army. Cross-border joint security operations are standard practice. The active collaboration of the Dublin

regime in the war against Irish nationalists reveals the benefits of Partition for British imperialism.

The fatal flaw

The success of Partition in the Twenty-six Counties stands in sharp contrast to its failure in the North: the Six Counties have proved to be inherently unstable. The local parliament that Britain established at Stormont Castle in 1921 stood for Loyalist privilege and the oppression of the nationalist people. A cycle of repression and resistance, and more repression and more resistance, finally erupted into armed conflict in the early 'seventies.

Far from solving the problem Partition has created permanent instability, ensuring that, after half a century, the 'Irish Question' has returned to plague British political life. Indeed Partition has made the problem even more difficult for Britain. The division of Ireland meant the *total* fusion of the Six Counties into Britain. Hence the war being fought on the streets of Belfast and Derry is even closer to the heart of the British state than was the Tan War that immediately preceded Partition. Anything that happens in the Six Counties now has immediate domestic repercussions for Britain: this is not a conflict in some remote colony, but one within the institutions of the United Kingdom itself.

The Six Counties have neither an independent capitalist class, nor any independent state institutions. The British state and the British capitalist class bear direct responsibility for maintaining social stability. The state machinery in the Six Counties cannot be separated into its 'Ulster' or English components. Former Labour Cabinet Minister Richard Crossman recalled in his diary the difficulties the Cabinet had in controlling allocations of money to the Six Counties. When the Prime Minister suggested cutting subsidies to a Belfast firm an interesting discussion ensued:

'It was pointed out that if we did this they would still get the subsidies from us because of the way Northern Irish finances relate to UK finances. At this point I said, "I am an ignoramus; may I be told what is the exact financial arrangement?" Nobody could say. Neither Jack Diamond nor the Chancellor knew the formula according to which the Northern Ireland Government gets its money. In all these years it has never been revealed to the politicians and I am longing to see whether now we shall get to the bottom of this very large, expensive secret.' (R H S Crossman, *The diaries of a Cabinet Minister*)

In fact there is no secret. The state exists to guarantee capitalist stability and no politician can divert the state machinery from this task. The British state could no more cut its ties with the Six Counties than it could close down Scotland Yard. But because Partition continues to provoke resistance, the British state must be on permanent war alert.

2 Why Britain can't withdraw

Withdrawal from Ireland now would be tantamount to dismantling a part of the British state itself. No significant section of the British ruling class could ever countenance this because it would represent a major blow to the

capitalist system. It is no exaggeration to say that the coherence of the British state depends on its continued domination of Ireland. This is the *revolutionary significance* of the 'Irish Question'. Defeat in Ireland would weaken the British capitalist class to such an extent that it would fundamentally alter class relations in Britain.

One of the great failures of the British left is its underestimation of the importance of Ireland. The Irish War is seen as an issue of third-rate importance: comparisons are often made with Kenya and Cyprus. In fact all that Ireland, Kenya and Cyprus have in common is the experience of imperialist domination. Britain was reluctant to lose its overseas colonies, but its survival was not at stake. It pulled out of Asia and Africa – but the British state remained intact. Ireland is different – the intricate web of colonial domination puts the British ruling class in the direct line of fire of the Irish liberation movement.

Some other colonial struggles help to illustrate the *peculiarity* of the Irish War. Algeria's links with France went some way towards the closeness of Anglo-Irish institutions. The war of liberation in Algeria and the subsequent withdrawal of France shook French society to its core. Under this strain the Fourth French Republic collapsed and even Charles De Gaulle's military coup could not prevent the mutiny of a section of the armed forces and widespread violence on the streets of France. The defeat of Portuguese colonialism in Africa had similar consequences. The withdrawal of Portugal in 1974 almost resulted in revolution and the semi-military dictatorship was overthrown. Portugal was convulsed by protracted class conflict and even today capitalist rule remains fragile. Yet neither France nor Portugal had nearly as much at stake in their colonies as Britain has in Ireland.

In his 1918 election manifesto Lloyd George summed up the significance of Ireland: 'So long as the Irish question remains unsettled there can be no political peace either in the United Kingdom or in the Empire'. If this was true before Partition and the integration of the Six Counties into the United Kingdom, it is a hundred times more true today.

Where they stand

The British ruling class has never flinched from enforcing its interests in Ireland. The Cabinet minutes of successive governments provide useful insights into the thinking behind British policy in Ireland. For obvious reasons these minutes are kept locked up for 30 years – hence we can only examine the record up to the early 'fifties.

In the late 'forties the British authorities were concerned about a growing wave of anti-Partition sentiment in Ireland. Feelings against Britain were running high and it seemed likely that republican violence could break out at any time. In 1948, the British representative in Dublin, Lord Rugby, warned Downing Street of a dangerous state of affairs:

'My forecast is that unless a move is made now on our side to anticipate and disperse the forces and influences now gathering we shall have bloodshed in Ireland, a grave state of disorder in the north with world opinion once again only too ready to believe that

England is misbehaving herself in Ireland.' (*Cabinet minutes*, 20 November 1948)

The Twenty-six Counties' declaration of a republic prompted the following memo from Cabinet secretary Norman Brook to Labour Prime Minister Attlee:

'Now that Eire will shortly cease to owe any allegiance to the Crown it has become a matter of first-class importance to this country that the North should continue to form 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 form part of a territory outside His Majesty's jurisdiction. Indeed, it seems unlikely that Great Britain would ever be able to agree with this even if the people of Northern Ireland desired it. There should, therefore, be no political difficulty, as circumstances now are, in giving a binding assurance that Northern Ireland shall never be excluded from the United Kingdom without her full and free consent.' (Cited in S Cronin, *Irish nationalism*)

So much for the 'Loyalist veto'! Britain would never 'be able to agree with this (Irish re-unification) even if the people of Northern Ireland desired it'. The response of the Labour Cabinet was fully in line with British imperialist interests. It published the Ireland Bill which declared 'that in no event will Northern Ireland or any part thereof cease to be part of His Majesty's dominions and of the United Kingdom without the consent of the parliament of Northern Ireland'. To make matters absolutely clear, Attlee commented that 'troops were present in Northern Ireland. . .to ensure that the will of the majority will not be overridden by pressures from outside the United Kingdom' (*Cronin*).

Just as Thatcher invoked the will of the majority of the people of the Malvinas to justify naked aggression against Argentina, so British imperialism has consistently used the 'Loyalist veto' to legitimise Partition. Even the British left has fallen for this apology, often blaming Loyalist intransigence, rather than imperialism, for the situation in Ireland. Take this example from a weekly left-wing paper:

'Thatcher is even reputed to have begun Cabinet discussions with the searching question "Why are we in Northern Ireland anyway?"

'With continuing Loyalist intransigence and mounting pressure for a settlement that can end the war, convincing answers to that question will be increasingly difficult to find.' (*Socialist Worker*, 26 April 1980)

The ruling class has no difficulty in answering 'that question'. It has long been acutely aware of the need to maintain Britain's domination over Ireland. In 1969 Prime Minister Harold Wilson justified the armed occupation of the Six Counties on the grounds that the soldiers were keeping the peace. But he was swift to reiterate the position outlined by Attlee twenty years before in his 'Downing Street Declaration':

'Nothing which has happened in recent weeks in Northern Ireland derogates from the clear pledge made by successive United Kingdom governments that Northern Ireland should not cease to be a part of the United Kingdom without the consent of the people of Northern Ireland. . .The border is not an issue.' (H Wilson, *The Labour Government 1964-70*)

This theme has been repeated over and over again throughout the Irish War. Wilson's successor James Callaghan, who played a key role in formulating the Irish policy of the Wilson Government, recalled how important was the assertion of the permanence of the British connection:

'We attached very great importance to reaffirming the pledge about Northern Ireland not ceasing to be part of the UK without the consent of the people of Northern Ireland. Indeed, the Home Office would never present me with a draft speech or statement at that time without automatically including it by way of a preface.' (J Callaghan, *A house divided*)

Since 1969, one bourgeois politician after another has stated in plain words that withdrawal from Ireland would have catastrophic consequences for Britain. This consensus is in itself remarkable. Politicians have only differed in their speculations on the grave consequences withdrawal might entail for the British ruling class. Former Tory and later Ulster Unionist MP Enoch Powell has spoken out clearly for his class: 'Ulster is Britain's test of its own will to be a nation. A nation that will not defend its frontiers or recognise the rights of its own people is well on the way to being no nation' (*The Guardian*, 15 February 1980). Powell's emphasis on the threat that Ireland now poses to the very fabric of the state is the key point. The editor of *The Times* has also displayed a clear grasp of the issues at stake: 'The differences so stubbornly insisted upon in Ulster concern the most fundamental of all political issues: allegiance, national identity, the legitimacy of the state. . .These are issues which are usually disposed of only when one side prevails decisively over the other' (21 November 1979).

Labour politicians have generally been preoccupied with the domestic upheaval that withdrawal from Ireland would precipitate. This approach emphasises the crucial link between the anti-colonial war and its domestic repercussions. Labour's Northern Ireland Minister Roy Mason was well known for putting the imperialist case in forthright terms:

'We would be fooling ourselves if we thought that the bloodletting that would flow from the precipitate withdrawal of troops would be confined to Northern Ireland. The undoubted violence could easily spread to the mainland with its Irish population.' (cited in K Kelly, *The longest war*)

Left-winger Stan Orme hammered home this point at the 1979 Labour Party Conference. He warned that the chaos that would ensue in Ireland would 'overflow into the cities of Britain, into the Liverpools and the Glasgows and the Londons, the Birminghams and the Manchesters' (*Conference report*).

Parliamentary united front

An examination of British policy on Ireland confirms the Marxist theory of the state. Marx argued that no matter which party has a majority in Parliament, on all essentials real power rests with the state apparatus. The British state has pursued a consistent Irish policy, and politicians of all parliamentary parties have toed the line. At different times the Labour and Tory parties have criticised one another's Irish policies. But they have both held firm to

the basic proposition that Ireland is above party politics. When the state faces a major threat, political debate is either suspended or directed towards discussion of how the interests of the state can best be preserved. This is the meaning of the bipartisanship that prevails between the major parties at Westminster. Bipartisanship is the united front of the parliamentary parties in response to a major threat to the British ruling class.

In fact bipartisanship goes back beyond the beginning of the present war. In 1949 the Northern Ireland Bill went through Parliament without any opposition. Even Labour left-wingers who had reservations about its 'immorality' and its 'capitulation to Orange bigotry' kept silent. The journal of the Labour left commented on the harmonious passing of the Bill that cemented Partition:

'The Bill went through virtually unchallenged. Indeed during the short debate on the Third Reading all sides of the House did their best to send it off in an atmosphere of goodwill. Hugh Delargy, who had been one of its most effective opponents, made a genuinely moving plea for moderation.' (*Tribune*, 20 May 1949)

Not even the mass internment of republican suspects in 1971 could force the Labour Party to break from bipartisanship. Indeed Wilson and Callaghan went out of their way to give this repressive measure their stamp of approval. *The Times* congratulated the leaders of the labour movement on their patriotism: 'Mr Wilson and Mr Callaghan have ensured that the essentials of bipartisanship on Northern Ireland remain unchanged. That is a service to the nation' (25 September 1981). Almost instinctively, Labour and Tory, Liberal and Social Democrat, all understand that the war in Ireland is an immediate and mortal threat to the British ruling class before which unity is essential.

2. The sectarian state

The Six Counties are peculiar because they are both a colony under military occupation – and a part of the United Kingdom. Because the link with Britain is entirely artificial, it requires the most extraordinary measures for its maintenance. The sectarian discrimination and oppression that have prevailed in the Six Counties from the beginning result from the fragility of the British connection.

1 A Protestant state for Protestant people

The creation and subsequent survival of the Six Counties required the denial of the democratic aspirations of the Irish people. In February 1920, when the Government of Ireland Act set out the plan for Partition, 40000 British troops were engaged in a bitter struggle with the liberation movement. The war for Irish freedom still raged in the South when the Six Counties Parliament at Stormont opened its doors on 7 June 1921. Stormont was imposed on Ireland by force of arms. Its only supporters were Britain's Loyalist allies, who have acted for more than 200 years as the agents of British colonial rule over the whole of Ireland. When control over the whole country could no longer be retained in the old way, they had to settle for what they could hold on to.

In March 1920 the Ulster Unionist Council abandoned its demand for a nine county state encompassing the whole of the historical province of Ulster. The UUC accepted Lloyd George's reasoning that a smaller Ulster with a substantial Protestant majority (66 per cent) was far preferable to trying to cling on to the whole province with only a slender majority (56 per cent). Once these calculations were completed and the territory accordingly carved up, the Loyalists turned their attention to the problem of how to guarantee the predominance of Protestant interest under the new regime.

In 1920 the Six Counties had a population of 820000 Protestants and 430000 Catholics. But superiority in numbers did not automatically guarantee stability. The Catholic minority was strongly imbued with a sense of Irish

nationalism and was therefore, almost by definition, disloyal. Though outnumbered two to one, the nationalist community had substantial majorities in two of the Six Counties, Fermanagh and Tyrone, and in Derry, the largest city after Belfast. From the outset, the overriding objective of the Stormont regime was to contain and control the nationalist community.

Before the institutions of Loyalist rule could be fully established, the Six Counties had to be brought under control. Local elections in June 1920 confirmed the necessity for coercion – republicans gained control of 25 out of 80 local council seats, including Derry. Loyalist politicians promptly dispensed with their democratic facade. Loyalist paramilitaries in the Ulster Volunteer Force fired into the nationalist Bogside from Derry's city walls. Particularly in Belfast, where Catholics were in a minority of 93 000, families were driven out of their homes. In Belfast too, 14 000 workers were forcibly ejected from their jobs in the shipyards and factories.

Britain's offensive against the nationalist community and the republican movement took the form of a sectarian pogrom. A division of labour between Westminster and Stormont allowed Loyalist mobs and paramilitaries to be unleashed on the nationalist population, leading to indiscriminate killing and the burning of Catholic houses. This division of labour persists to this day – the Loyalists do Britain's dirty work with discreet British backing while British politicians talk loftily about democracy and political initiatives. This also provides the British establishment with a valuable propaganda weapon: the conflict can be presented as sectarian strife between rival communities.

To give Stormont a degree of legitimacy, Westminster had to put the Loyalist mobs into uniforms. The paramilitaries became the Special Constabulary. The British set up the Royal Ulster Constabulary as a regular (armed) police force while the Army continued its war against the republican movement. By the summer of 1922 the total number of security forces in the Six Counties had grown to include 16 Army battalions, nearly 30 000 A, B, and C Specials, about 20 000 in the UVF, 7 500 C1 Specials and an undisclosed number in the RUC. This massive military machine eventually succeeded in its objective of breaking down the resistance of the nationalist population. By the end of 1922 'peace' was established and the Stormont regime got down to the business of consolidating its power.

Sham democracy

Sectarianism is built into the Six County state. Its sectarian character is not the product of the fundamentalist religious ideology of Orange extremists, but a means of ensuring British domination. Sectarianism operates through a system of comprehensive and systematic social discrimination. Without it the Six Counties could not survive. Discrimination in favour of Protestants of all social classes creates a tightly-knit bloc of Loyalist support for British imperialism. The Loyalist bloc is essential for keeping the nationalist community under control and for maintaining Partition.

Sectarianism plays a vital role for its British creators. It welds together all sections of the Loyalist community whilst keeping the nationalist population

in a constant state of subjugation. It also forces the Loyalist population into a permanent alliance with Britain, since the source of their privileges is the Six County state created and sustained by Westminster. This is why controlling the state machine – even at local government level – has been so important for the Loyalist establishment. Fixing elections has been one of the major political activities of the Loyalists ever since Partition.

One of the features of the Six Counties which has done much to reinforce the notion that it is just another part of the UK, is that its people do at regular intervals go to the ballot box. What is more they do so at the same time as the British, sending 12 MPs to Westminster and electing local councillors on the same day as people of Hackney or Sheffield. It is not widely appreciated in Britain that elections in Northern Ireland have more in common with the sort of bogus polls that take place in countries like El Salvador, than anything that goes on in Western Europe.

Intimidation of Catholic electors, harassment of election campaigners, polling frauds – especially the impersonation of voters who have died or emigrated – violence, even murder, are all longstanding characteristics of Six County electoral contests. The fact that violence at the polls has in general been less in evidence than in Third World countries is mainly due to a sophisticated system of ballot-rigging which renders open violence superfluous. After Partition Westminster and Stormont constituency boundaries were drawn in such a way as to ensure the return of a Loyalist majority. This was fairly easy – it was more difficult to stitch up local government elections. And it was here that control over much public sector employment, housing, health, education and other services, was concentrated.

Stormont was determined never to allow nationalists to repeat their success in the 1920 local election when they won 25 out of 80 council seats. In 1921 the Loyalist parliament passed a law which enforced the dissolution of all councils that would not swear allegiance to Stormont and the British Crown and then replaced them with government commissioners. In July 1922 proportional representation in local elections – originally introduced by Britain to reduce the Sinn Fein vote in the South – was abolished. This measure not only cut nationalist representation, but wiped out smaller parties and independent candidates.

In 1923 the British government appointed a judicial commission to fix new electoral boundaries. By the method commonly known as 'gerrymandering', wards were redrawn in such a way that areas with a nationalist majority population would return a majority of Loyalist councillors. This was done by concentrating the nationalists in a few large wards returning a smaller number of seats than the Loyalists dispersed over a greater number of smaller wards. Given that the majorities thus achieved were subject to changes as a result of even small population shifts, gerrymandering was a continuous process. In slightly different forms, it has continued under Direct Rule. Until recently the right to vote in local elections was restricted to rate-payers and their wives, excluding people who owned no private rateable property. In 1923 a further restriction was introduced: the right to vote was confined to

individuals owning land worth £5 or more. The object was, according to one of the measure's supporters, 'to disenfranchise a very large number of irresponsible people'.

It was not only Loyalist bigots who fiddled the votes. In 1945 the British Labour Government introduced universal suffrage and abolished the business vote for local elections in Britain. Northern Ireland was exempt from this reform. Stormont introduced its own Representation of the People Act in 1946 which restricted the franchise still further (removing lodgers from the electoral roll) and introduced the business vote for Stormont elections too. The aim of this law was openly stated by Stormont Chief Whip Major L E Curran:

'The best way to prevent the overthrow of the government by people who had no stake in the country and had not the welfare of the people of Ulster at heart was to disenfranchise them.' (Cited in M Farrell, *The Orange State*)

The end result of all these measures was to make one Protestant vote equivalent to 2.5 Catholic ones. Local councils in areas with a nationalist majority were more often than not run by Loyalist politicians.

The effect of these fraudulent practices are shown in the table below. It provides the results from a number of district and county councils from the 1966 local elections:

	ELECTORS		COUNCILLORS	
	Adult Catholic	Adult Protestant	Nationalist	Loyalist
Armagh UDC*	3139	2798	8	12
Dungannon UDC	1845	2041	7	14
Dungannon RDC*	7329	7476	6	13
Fermanagh Co Cl.	15884	15222	17	33
Derry Co Borough	18432	11340	8	12
Newry UDC	5843	1364	12	6
Omagh UDC	2605	1949	9	12

* UDC=Urban District Council, RDC=Rural District Council

(*The Cameron Commission*, 1969.)

The extent of electoral manipulations is particularly striking in the example of Derry's ward system:

	POPULATION		SEATS
	Catholic	Protestant	
North Ward	2530	3946	8 Unionist
Waterside	1852	3697	4 Unionist
South Ward	10047	1138	8 Nationalist

(*The Cameron Commission*, 1969.)

The exclusion of Catholics from political institutions was the cornerstone of the system of social discrimination. It provided a framework for extending discrimination into the allocation of housing, social services and local government employment.

2 What discrimination means

Discrimination against Catholics in all fields of social life is the cement which holds together the Loyalist state. Until the late 'sixties it was virtually government policy to discriminate against Catholics in the allocation of jobs, housing and services. The agents of discrimination were Protestant employers, Stormont and local government. Since British troops intervened in 1969 a few things have changed. Westminster enforced a local government reform which removed housing and education from council control. And it introduced proportional representation in local elections in the hope of encouraging middle class Catholics to participate in the institutions of the Six County state. These changes had no noticeable effect on Catholic housing and employment conditions. If anything discrimination got worse during the 'seventies. What *has* changed since Direct Rule was imposed in 1972 is that the British state itself has assumed a direct role in the allocation of resources and in the preservation of the sectarian character of the Six Counties.

Jobs, homes and services are distributed in the Six Counties as perks for Protestants. The Official Unionist Party has never made any bones about this. Basil Brooke, later Stormont Prime Minister and now Lord Brookeborough, made his position clear in 1933:

'There were a great number of Protestants and Orangemen who employed Roman Catholics. He felt he could speak freely on this subject as he had not a Roman Catholic about his own place. . . He would appeal to Loyalists, therefore, wherever possible, to employ good Protestant lads and lassies.' (cited in Campaign for Social Justice in Northern Ireland, *Plain Truth*, Dungannon 1972)

More recently Democratic Unionist councillor Charles Poots, asserted the same principle even more forcefully:

'If I was in control of this country it would not be in the same state as it is in now. I would cut off all supplies, including water and electricity, to Catholic areas. And I would stop Catholics from getting social security. It is the only way of dealing with enemies of the state.' (cited in *Belfast Bulletin*, No 9)

Sectarian discrimination helps to enforce the subjugation of the nationalist people. A British academic survey put the same point in more diplomatic terms: 'The difference in economic opportunity is a regulator in maintaining the status quo' (D P Barritt and C F Parker, *The Northern Ireland problem*). The emigration statistics reflect the plight of the nationalist people. Between 1937 and 1961 90 000 Catholics and 69 000 Protestants emigrated. For Catholics this meant an emigration of 21 per cent of their population; Protestants lost eight per cent of their community.

Segregation and discrimination in housing are pervasive. The civil rights movement of the 'sixties started as a campaign against the housing policies

of one particular council – Dungannon. Here the population was 50.3 per cent Catholic, but the council was Loyalist-controlled (14 out of 21 councillors were Unionist). For 34 years not one new Catholic family had been allocated a permanent home whilst Protestants had received more than 200. There were more than 300 families, almost all Catholic, on the waiting list, some for up to 12 years. When Catholic tenants were moved into pre-fabricated bungalows during a slum clearance operation the council announced that these were to be destroyed to make way for further house-building. It was later revealed that no such plans existed. Many old Catholic homes were claimed by slum clearance – without replacement.

In 1966 Derry Corporation decided not to build any more homes at all in order to contain the growth of the nationalist community. There were more than 1500 families on the waiting list in 1969 and more than 1000 homes were occupied by more than one family – in many cases seven or eight families in single-family dwellings.

Segregation in housing has always been government policy in the Six Counties. The sectarian geography of Belfast and Derry in particular has been sharply defined through housing and planning policies. Since 1969 the British state reinforced segregation through the erection of innumerable check points, Army forts and ghetto barriers which serve to encircle and control the Catholic population. Apart from their economic and later military uses, segregation policies have played a major role in intensifying sectarianism by reinforcing the homogeneity of the Loyalist community and thus its traditional fear, hatred and bigotry.

Sectarianism has also influenced regional planning. One of the ways in which Stormont ensured that 'the Protestant people' were looked after was through the selection of areas for new investment. In the 'sixties, during the premiership of Terence O'Neill, Stormont encouraged industrial and infrastructural developments to compensate for the decline of engineering, shipbuilding and textile industries. Under the *Matthew Plan* which in 1965 was incorporated into the Labour Government's *Wilson Plan* the Protestant towns Antrim/Ballymena and Lurgan/Portadown (renamed Craigavon) were designated as development areas. New investment was concentrated in the area in a thirty mile radius around Belfast in which 75 per cent of all Ireland's Protestants live. Derry, the second largest city, with a natural harbour and other advantages (not to mention a 20 per cent rate of unemployment) was neglected. The location of new industrial investment in the east was designed to ensure that whatever employment could be generated would serve Loyalists who had lost their jobs in the declining industries. West of the River Bann the country was left to rot. The Great Northern rail link was axed, leaving Fermanagh, Tyrone and practically all of County Derry with no rail link. Stormont's planners systematically discriminated against Derry, with its Catholic majority, in favour of Protestant-dominated Coleraine. A small town on the northern coastline with scarcely any industry or higher education, Coleraine was promoted as a Loyalist citadel remote from the heartlands of Antrim and Down. Industry was encouraged to set up there and in 1965 it

was chosen as the site of the Six Counties' second university, after Queens in Belfast. This selection was made despite the fact that Derry was the natural location, with already developed institutions of higher education.

Jobs for the boys

Discrimination in employment is the most deeply rooted source of division in the north of Ireland, stretching back far beyond Partition into the era of the formation of the Irish working class. Industrialisation in the nineteenth century went hand in hand with the development of a divided labour market, in which Protestant workers emerged as a privileged layer. Protestant workers fought for the preservation and extension of control over hiring and firing in industry, often against employers who sought to avail themselves of cheap Catholic labour. In Belfast, the centre of the developing shipbuilding and engineering industries, pogroms and expulsions, on the one hand, and craft-based Protestant workers' associations on the other, were used to assert Protestants' privileged access to employment in all but the most menial occupations (see Andy Clarkson, Phil Murphy, 'The Protestant working class', *Revolutionary Communist Papers* No7). Catholic workers were regarded as a threat to Protestant wages and jobs and Protestant workers' activity was devoted to the consolidation of privilege through mutual agreement with the state and the employers. This is the root of the Protestant all-class alliance. Protestant workers' concern to preserve the link with Britain and to prevent any moves towards Home Rule reflected their commitment to maintaining their privileged position in the job market. Britain was the source of investment and markets on which Protestant employment depended and political integration with Britain guaranteed the permanent subjection of the Catholic population. Partition and the establishment of the Six County state consolidated this sectarian division.

The extent of discrimination in employment is shown in unemployment levels and in the occupational profiles of Protestant and Catholic workers. In 1971, when the rate of unemployment in the Belfast Urban Area stood at 6.6 per cent, these were the rates in some of Belfast's Catholic ghetto areas: Ballymurphy 33.3; Whiterock 20.4; Lower Falls 19.7; Glenravel 19.1; Milltown/Turf Lodge 18.8. Meanwhile unemployment in two of the poorest Protestant areas, Shankill and Woodvale, stood at 10 per cent (F W Boal, P Doherty, D C Pringle, *The spatial distribution of some social problems in the Belfast urban area*).

Catholic workers have been systematically excluded from employment in public services and administration, except in the most menial jobs. Some figures from the 'sixties reflect the traditional pattern: of 387 specialist doctors – 31 were Catholic; of 319 employees in the administrative grades of the Civil Service – 23 were Catholic; of 209 professional and technical workers in the government – 13 were Catholic; in Lurgan, a town with a 45.7 per cent Catholic population, 25 of 156 council employees were Catholic; in Armagh (53.5 per cent Catholic) 8 of 193 non-manual District Council employees were Catholic; in Dungannon Urban Council (50 per cent

Catholic) no Catholic was in the non-manual grades — there were however 10 Catholic labourers; in Fermanagh County Council 10 out of 166 employees were Catholic.

Discrimination in the recession

Since the emergence of the civil rights movement in the late 'sixties and the subsequent explosion of nationalist protest into a full scale war, Britain has been forced to modify some of the worst excesses of sectarian discrimination. However, despite a few changes and the massive increase in public sector employment, the basic structure of the labour market has remained unchanged.

Since Direct Rule the Six Counties have also had to cope with the recession. The local economy has suffered worse than any part of Britain. The total number of manufacturing jobs fell by 50 000 — almost a third — between 1972 and 1982. The number of unemployed now exceeds the number left with a job in manufacturing (*Financial Times*, 17 March 1982).

The collapse of the economy has compounded the problems facing British imperialism in Ireland. The loss of skilled engineering and shipbuilding jobs directly hit Protestant workers who had a monopoly over the higher grades in industry. To maintain stability, jobs had to be found for Britain's Loyalist allies. The Labour Government under Harold Wilson embarked on a massive programme of state intervention, consisting of subsidies for industry, incentives for investors and the expansion of public sector employment. The aim was to achieve 'parity with the UK' in unemployment levels. Between 1974 and 1980, public sector employment rose by 23 per cent. More than 55 per cent of the growth in male public sector employment was due to expansion in the police and prison service (L O'Dowd and others, 'From Labour to the Tories: the ideology of containment in Northern Ireland' *Capital and Class*, Winter 1982).

State subsidies prevented the collapse of shipbuilding and other nationalised industries. Even the private sector became directly dependent on state intervention. In 1981, for example, 60 per cent of construction in the Six Counties was a direct result of state expenditure and most of the rest were its indirect beneficiaries (*O'Dowd*).

State expenditure could provide resources for the employment of Loyalist workers but it could not alter Loyalist control over the labour market. The Fair Employment Agency (FEA), set up in 1976 in an attempt to give British rule a non-sectarian public image, has done nothing to remove the Loyalist jobs monopoly. Indeed, the FEA itself has been forced to report the continuation and even the intensification of discrimination under Direct Rule. Its first report, published in 1978, showed that 72.5 per cent of all industrial workers were Protestants. In vehicle building the figure rose to 80 per cent, and to 90 per cent in shipbuilding. The occupational profile showed Catholics concentrated in the unskilled and semi-skilled jobs.

Later FEA reports revealed wide discrimination against Catholic school-leavers, regardless of their qualifications. The publication of such material was becoming embarrassing for Britain. Future FEA investigations were

commissioned secretly. One such report, into the highly sensitive area of civil service employment, was completed in July 1981 and subsequently 'leaked' to the press. The civil service had doubled its size since 1972. On the surface it appeared that the total number of Catholics employed had increased significantly. But the FEA's breakdown of the occupation and salary grades of the 19 604 civil servants surveyed revealed clear and continuing discrimination.

Occupational profile of Catholic and Protestant populations (%)

	Catholic	Protestant
1 Professional/managerial	12	15
2 Non-manual	19	26
3 Skilled manual	17	19
4 Semi-skilled manual	27	25
5 Unskilled/unemployed	25	15
	100	100

(FEA, *An industrial and occupational profile of the two sectors of the population of Northern Ireland*, Belfast 1978)

Salary grades by religion

	% Protestant	% Catholic
Senior Principal or higher	87.3	12.7
Principal & Deputy Principal	83.2	16.8
Staff Officer	82.7	17.3
Executive Officer 1	76.4	23.6
Executive Officer 2	71.7	28.3
Clerk	63.8	36.2
Electrical Assistant	63.6	36.4

(See, 'The FEA', *Iris*, November 1982)

The December 1982 FEA report on the Northern Ireland Electricity Service confirms the traditional pattern. Of the 291 senior directors and managers, 2.5 per cent and 4 per cent respectively were Catholics. Less than 10 per cent of the engineers were Catholics. And of the administration, fewer than 12.5 per cent came from the nationalist community (*An Phoblacht/Republican News*, 16 December 1982).

The FEA has proved unwilling and unable to act on this information. Its membership is made up of academics, businessmen, trade union leaders and — from 1976 to 1981 — Glen Barr of the UDA sectarian murder gang. It has

attempted occasional prosecutions of individual employers, none of which have been successful. Even this level of activity has proved too much for the British state. In 1978 an investigation into discrimination at the Ford Autolite company in Belfast was dropped on the insistence of Labour minister Don Concannon, who warned that it might cause 'security problems'. In other words, sectarian employment practices must be left untouched to ensure stability in the Six Counties. British aid to foreign investors has been based on similar considerations. The DeLorean car factory fiasco was launched on £90 million of the state's money. The factory was built in a Catholic area of West Belfast. But before it opened the UDA met with the British government and obtained assurances that at least half the workforce would be Protestant. The government then had to spend more money — on a new road to allow the skilled Loyalist workers to get across Belfast into the DeLorean plant.

The deepening crisis of capitalism creates immense problems for imperialist rule in Ireland. Westminster can no longer simply pump money into the Six Counties to protect Loyalist workers from the ravages of the crisis. Although the Tory onslaught on public spending has not been as vigorously pursued in the Six Counties as elsewhere, its impact is still considerable. The dependence of the Six Counties' economy on state subsidies means that even modest cuts have a much bigger impact than in Britain. Thus between 1979 and 1981 male unemployment rose by 70 per cent (*Financial Times*, 17 March 1982). By November 1982 the official level of unemployment in the Six Counties had passed 20 per cent; in some Catholic areas it was more than 50 per cent. The impoverishment of the Six Counties gives Westminster less and less room to manoeuvre. Attempts at 'normalisation' and economic development must give way to more repression. Whatever jobs remain will go to the Loyalists. Nationalist workers can expect more poverty and coercion. The only growth sector remains the 'security industry'. This sector already accounts for more than 10 per cent of the Six Counties' workforce. This is the most sectarian sphere of employment of all — 96 per cent of the RUC and 98 per cent of the UDR are Protestants (*Belfast Bulletin*, Spring 1982).

Loyal to Britain, not the working class

The structure of oppression built into the Six County state means that most social conflict takes the form of nationalist resistance against Loyalist repression. The Protestant working class has no political existence as a class — it acts and fights as part of the Loyalist community. Discrimination in jobs, housing and social services ensures that Loyalist workers have a direct stake in the British connection and its corollary — the partition of Ireland and the oppression of the nationalist community. Unity between Protestant and Catholic workers is out of the question. Indeed the main objective of Loyalist workers' organisations is to block Catholic access to jobs and state services.

British imperialism is prepared to support Loyalist privilege and even tolerate the restrictive practices of Loyalist workers. This uncharacteristic tolerance for workers' interference in the labour market is due to Britain's realisation that its domination of Ireland depends on the continued support

of Loyalist workers. The main mechanism through which Protestant privileges are sustained is the trade union movement. In the Six Counties trade unions do not merely protect workers' wages and conditions; they attempt to protect Protestant living standards at the expense of the Catholics. The massive expulsion of Catholic workers from the shipyards and industry in 1920 was organised through the unions. In the aftermath of the 1920 expulsions, Vigilance Committees were established at workplaces to prevent the return of Catholic workers. In more recent times mass intimidation has been used more rarely — although many Catholics were again driven out of industrial jobs in Belfast in the early 'seventies. Sectarian discrimination has become institutionalised and the unions can control the allocation of apprenticeships through 'Protestant-only' closed shops.

Institutionalised discrimination at the place of work gives Loyalist workers a strong stake in the maintenance of Partition. Thus their immediate interests are realised through strengthening the Loyalist community and the British connection. This directly contradicts the interests of Catholic workers whose aspirations can only be realised in a united Ireland. Partition not only divides the working class — it also prevents Protestant workers from acting as a class and forces them to become an adjunct of British imperialism.

Although workers in the Six Counties are highly unionised, class issues — even basic industrial issues — have always been overshadowed by sectarian divisions. The labour movement exists only on paper. This is why neither the British Labour Party nor organisations like the Northern Ireland Labour Party modelled on it, have ever had any strong support in the Six Counties. The divisions imposed by Partition mean that even the most elementary forms of trade union unity disintegrate under the pressure of sectarianism.

A good illustration of these tendencies is the response of Northern Ireland union leaders to an initiative launched by Labour left MP Frank Allaun in January 1983. For some time Allaun has sought support from union leaders in the Six Counties for his project of establishing the Labour Party there. Allaun wanted the union leaders to organise a conference in the Six Counties as a first step towards establishing new Labour Party branches. The union leadership did not want to know. One union official commented that 'it is impossible to get involved with the political structure here without blowing the whole movement apart' (*Morning Star*, 6 January 1983). And Northern Ireland trade union leader Terry Carlin remarked that Allaun's plan 'was not something with which unions wanted to get officially involved'. In other words any political initiative — even a modest proposal to establish Labour Party branches — threatens to upset the delicate sectarian balance and expose the fiction of trade union unity.

The labour movement in the Six Counties can survive only as long as it remains aloof from day to day political conflict and especially from the war. Its existence is thus of no consequence; its irrelevance is exposed by every important development in the war. There can be no real labour movement in the Six Counties until the existing structures of oppression and discrimination are destroyed.

3. The longest war

Britain's longest war of the twentieth century broke out in Ireland in 1969. This war has already claimed more than 2500 lives. It is a war of many parts – from computerised intelligence to the super-grass, from the SAS to the UVF, from helicopters to plastic bullets. In the following two chapters we examine how the legal systems in Ireland and in Britain have been geared to the imperialist war drive. Here we examine the conduct of the war on the military and political fronts.

The peculiarities of the Irish

In many ways Britain's war against the Irish people has much in common with other 'counter-insurgency' operations against colonised peoples. Britain is a foreign army of occupation – and is seen as such by the nationalist community. The central objective of the liberation movement is national independence and freedom from British interference. This basic conflict is well recognised by experts in the British defence establishment. When the BBC asked former Army commander in Northern Ireland Sir Harry Tuzo whether he saw any prospect of IRA men being handed over by the nationalist population, he dismissed the idea as 'going completely against the national character and against all the trends of history' (*The Listener*, 17 June 1971).

The alien character of the British Army of occupation was well summed up by *Daily Telegraph* defence correspondent Clare Hollingworth:

'The units are growing more experienced in anti-insurgency and doubtless too, their intelligence is better; but it is difficult to understand why the British Army which penetrated the Malaysian communist rebel organisation has been unable to plant successful agents in an organisation whose members share the same round eyes, pale skins and cultural background.' (14 November 1977)

This isolation of the British Army from the nationalist population is particularly striking in the border-county of Armagh. All supplies and personnel are airlifted in and soldiers never venture out of the bunkers unless they are

backed up by considerable fire power.

The Six Counties, however, are not merely a colony; they are also a part of the United Kingdom. This means that the struggle for national independence also means the break-up of Britain as it is now constituted. Any major explosion of the conflict in the Six Counties always threatens to overflow into Britain itself. Hence what is at stake in Northern Ireland is not only the retention of an old colony but the stability of the British state itself.

The fact that the Six Counties are both a colony and a part of Britain has a major impact on the conduct of the war. The British ruling class cannot admit that it is fighting a foreign war, because this would undermine the legitimacy of the United Kingdom. Most of the time it cannot admit that it is fighting a war at all, for that would raise questions about the basis of British authority in the Six Counties. The British establishment has thus tried to present the war as either a local conflict between two factions of religious bigots or as a simple law and order problem.

Sometimes the ruling class goes to absurd lengths to pretend that the war does not exist. In 1977, the Irish weekly *Hibernia* reported that SAS commando Sergeant Barry Davies who had been on active service in Northern Ireland, received an M.B.E. in the 1974 honours list for 'services to community relations in Northern Ireland' (27 October 1977).

Whether they call it religious strife, criminal behaviour, or 'community relations' – the ruling class knows that it is fighting a war in Ireland. Politicians may mince words and promise reforms and new initiatives, but they never lose sight of the central military objective. Former Labour Prime Minister Wilson put it straight in Parliament in 1971: 'no political solution can come about, or be put into effect, until what is called the military solution is effective – until the security problem is solved and seen to be solved' (*Hansard*, 25 November 1971).

1 War plans

Since the British troops first invaded the Six Counties in 1969, British strategy has been modified and refined. During the first phase of the war from 1969 to 1972 the British plan was to maintain the democratic facade of Stormont and use the Army to quell the nationalist revolt. When the war erupted almost out of control, this plan had to be abandoned. Since the collapse of Stormont in March 1972 Westminster has sought to make Direct Rule more acceptable through a series of schemes designed to give Catholic politicians a stake in some sort of devolved Six Counties administration with very limited powers. Until 1981 the British authorities combined a ruthless military drive against the IRA with a package of reforms designed to restore the appearance of 'normality' to the streets of the Six Counties. This phase of the war came to an end in 1981 when the mass campaign in support of the H-Block hunger-strikers proved beyond doubt that the situation was far from normal. Since the hunger-strikes the British state has reverted to its earlier emphasis on counter-insurgency solutions – of which the most infamous is the shoot-to-kill policy that claimed 10 lives within weeks of Sinn Fein's success in the

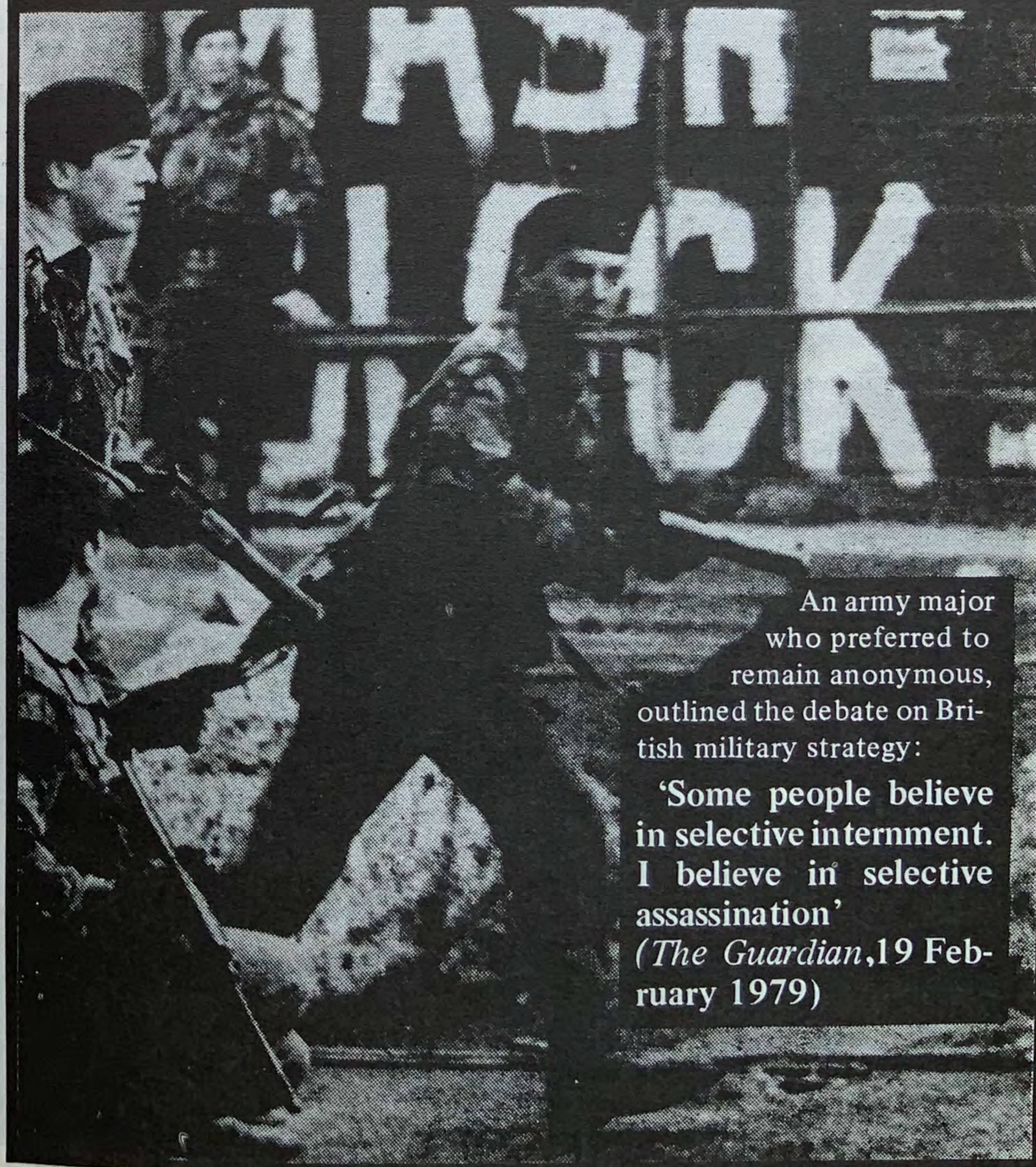
Soldiers know a war when they see one

General Sir Walter Walker on how to deal with the Irish 'natives'

'We have to decide if Northern Ireland is part of Britain or not – and, if act accordingly. We should cut off their petrol, gas, electricity and stop food going in, soften them up and go in; give warning so they can get their women and children clear before we go in – but go in'. (Cited in C Limpkin, *The battle of the Bogside*)

Lieutenant Colonel Derek Wilford after his parachute regiment shot dead 14 unarmed civilians on 30 January 1972 – and before his receipt of an OBE:

'It will always be a matter of regret if anyone should be killed, even soldiers. In these terms you could describe it as a disaster to the other side. Indeed it was.' (*The Times*, 7 March 1982)



An army major who preferred to remain anonymous, outlined the debate on British military strategy:

'Some people believe in selective internment. I believe in selective assassination' (*The Guardian*, 19 February 1979)



The two sides of the Irish War

October 1982 Assembly elections.

Let's look more closely at the shifts in imperialist strategy from the beginnings of the Irish War in the civil rights campaigns of the 'sixties, through to the bitter armed conflicts that followed the hunger-strikes.

Throughout 1968 and 1969 the nationalist ghettos were seething with anger. Protests organised through the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association were met with violent repression. Demonstrations demanding basic democratic rights were either banned by Stormont or set upon by Loyalist mobs. The sectarian RUC, and its much-hated paramilitary reserve, the 'B' Specials, unleashed a campaign of terror against the campaign for civil rights. But indiscriminate repression only provoked more nationalist resistance. The violence came to a head after the traditional Loyalist Apprentice Boys march on 12 August in Derry. Rioting following the march led to the siege of the Bogside, Derry's nationalist ghetto. The RUC and 'B' Specials attacked the nationalist community in force. Armoured cars with machine guns rolled through the streets and for the first time CS gas was used by police in British uniforms.

More than 200 people were wounded in the first day of the battle. But Bogside would not surrender. The RUC was forced to retreat and barricades were erected. 'Free Derry' was declared a 'no-go' area to the forces of repression. Rioting spread to other towns and cities and the Six Counties edged towards a total collapse of law and order. On 14 August 1969, Wilson's Labour Government ordered British troops into action in the Six Counties. The longest war had begun.

As far as British interests were concerned the troops arrived not a minute too soon. The local security forces had proved incapable of keeping 'the Queen's peace' and enforcing British law and order. Indeed their brutal repressive techniques only served to rouse world opinion against Stormont. Millions of television viewers across the world saw 'British' police laying into unarmed and peaceful demonstrations with clubs and batons, CS gas and water cannons – violence on a scale unfamiliar in Western Europe. Something had to be done to improve Britain's image and to re-establish social stability. The unashamed random brutality of the RUC had to be replaced by a more discreet, and more systematic, deployment of British terror.

Once the troops were on the streets, Britain's first priority was to salvage Stormont. Westminster politicians knew that some of the more vicious sectarian excesses of the RUC and 'B' Specials were counter-productive: they only provoked nationalist anger. They believed that a few well-publicised reforms could sort out the problems and allow order to be restored. Thus in October 1969, the Wilson Government accepted the recommendations on policing from the Hunt Commission – set up to investigate the earlier disturbances in Derry. Hunt proposed that the RUC should be reorganised and the infamous 'B' Specials disbanded. The Specials were to be replaced by a full and part-time paramilitary force under the control of the British Army; this force later became known as the Ulster Defence Regiment.

These reforms were entirely cosmetic. There was never any question of

establishing a non-sectarian 'peace-keeping' force — the objective was to demonstrate to public opinion in Britain and beyond that Westminster was even-handed. In reality, the 8100 'B' Specials were replaced by an identical number of British troops. And the new UDR turned out to be little more than a more professional and better-armed version of the 'B' Specials. Application forms for the new force were sent to all former Specials, and 50 per cent of the initial recruits to the UDR were 'B' Specials in new uniforms.

The reorganisation of the security forces backfired on both Stormont and Westminster, however. As repression continued, these reforms failed to appease the nationalist community. Increasing numbers of Catholics realised that their only protection against sectarian pogroms lay in building their own military organisation. The Loyalist community was also antagonised by the new proposals. It took the changes at face value — and saw in the disbanding of the 'B' Specials a setback for its interests. The announcement of the Hunt Commission's proposals led to rioting in the Loyalist Shankill Road in Belfast. Instead of bringing stability, the first year of military occupation only heightened sectarian tensions as the Loyalist establishment sought to defend its privileges. The threat of British/Loyalist pogroms was met by the resistance of the nationalist community: the result was the emergence of the modern republican movement.

The Army was in the front line of the drive to re-establish order. As an agent of the British state it quickly lost its 'non-sectarian' image and turned its energies towards smashing nationalist resistance. After a series of riots on the nationalist Ballymurphy estate in Belfast in 1970, Army commander-in-chief Lieutenant-General Freeland declared war on nationalist rioters. In April he warned that the Army would shoot petrol-bombers on sight. He boasted about his select marksmen who were equipped with the latest night-sight rifles: 'I will not elaborate on this' said Freeland 'but you do not want to get in the way of one' (*The Times*, 4 April 1970). This was no empty threat: within three months British troops had shot dead three civilians. By November, soldiers were instructed not to wait to see what was being thrown at them, but to shoot first (*The Guardian*, 9 November 1970).

The British authorities turned to try to crush the nationalist community because they realised that the movement for civil rights had become a movement for Irish unity. The manifest failure of the campaign to reform Stormont forced Catholic people towards the realisation that nothing less than a united Ireland could meet their needs. British troops thus found themselves face to face with a movement of national liberation. Even worse, this movement was no longer just a political campaign of protests and demonstrations. By the summer of 1970 a revitalised IRA had emerged as the defensive arm of the nationalist community. The IRA showed that it was back in June 1970 when its Belfast Brigade successfully resisted a sectarian invasion of the Short Strand, an isolated Catholic ghetto.

In July 1970 the Army launched the first of its many operations designed to crush the national liberation movement. The Army sealed off the nationalist Falls Road area of Belfast and saturated it with troops. It imposed

a curfew and soldiers went on a house to house rampage. To show that everything was back to normal the military drove leading Loyalist politicians around the area to inspect the captured territory. As a result of this and many smaller operations of a similar kind, the battle lines soon became clearly drawn, with the British Army on one side and the IRA on the other. The British state acknowledged this in January 1971 when the Army entered negotiations with the IRA and a temporary truce was arranged. The IRA saw the breakdown of this truce as marking its formal declaration of war. On 6 February 1971, the IRA shot dead its first British soldier. The war was now out in the open.

The year 1971 marked a watershed in the war. Thousands of British troops poured into the Six Counties; by the end of the year the army of occupation was 15000 strong. This enormous military invasion indicated that there was no going back to Stormont. To prove it the IRA launched a bombing campaign designed to stretch the Army to the limit. The bombings gathered momentum from month to month. In April there were 37 major explosions, in May the number rose to 47, in June it was 50 and in July it reached 91. The movement of nationalist resistance grew from strength to strength. The killing of two youths in Derry in July provoked three days of nationalist rioting. Although the British Army attacked with tear gas, truncheons, rubber and real bullets it could not break the will to fight of the nationalist community. On the contrary, nationalist youths queued up to join the IRA.

Instead of curbing resistance, Army repression only unified the nationalist community around the IRA. Even the middle class Catholic Social Democratic and Labour Party (formed in 1970 on a platform which has attempted to reconcile the nationalist community to a reformed British rule) could not remain immune from the groundswell of nationalist fervour. Yielding to public pressure the SDLP's representatives withdrew from Stormont in July. The last links between Stormont and the nationalist population were broken.

The nationalist revolt created panic in establishment circles. What was at first a small-scale security operation had turned into a full-blown war. After two years of occupation the British Army was even less in control of the situation than when it went into action in August 1969. The reassertion of British authority required drastic action. On 24 July 1971 the Army announced that it was going onto the offensive. On 9 August, the British authorities in a series of dawn raids, seized hundreds of republican suspects and interned them without charge or trial in special concentration camps. Internment was a public admission that Britain was fighting a colonial war against a people who did not recognise that their land was a part of Britain. With a wave of the hands *The Times* dismissed liberal objections that Internment would antagonise the nationalist population, noting correctly that 'the populace could hardly be more antagonistic than it was' (10 August 1971).

Towards Direct Rule

Internment was a complete failure. Leading republicans were able to evade the Army net and the nationalist community could not be cowed into sub-

mission by such tactics. The majority of the 342 detainees were civil rights campaigners, old republicans or people who just happened to live in Catholic ghettos. The RUC's intelligence proved to be inaccurate and out of date. In Armagh, British troops arrived to arrest a man who had died four years earlier. The only positive result of the massive security operation was that it allowed the British Army to gather useful information on its opponents and thus assist the reorganisation of its intelligence services. An Army spokesman later justified the raids on the grounds that 'it took 7 years in Malaya to build up the equivalent intelligence we have gained in a few months' (*The Observer*, 30 January 1972).

Internment was also a political disaster. The raids, house-searches, harassment and intimidation of the nationalist community helped destroy what little illusions remained in British democracy. Internment gave the green light for Loyalist pogroms. Within 24 hours of its announcement 13 people had been shot dead. Catholic families were driven out of mixed residential areas – within six weeks 8000 people were forced to abandon their homes. Then came the reports of the indignities and torture suffered by internees in Long Kesh, Hollywood barracks and in the prison ship Maidstone. The systematic beatings and new experiments in sensory deprivation techniques became public knowledge. All in all, Internment generated a level of solidarity in the nationalist community unparalleled in its recent history. Support for the republican movement increased enormously. As one historian put it: 'Internment did not crush the Provos, but unleashed them' (J Bowyer Bell, *The secret army: the IRA 1916-1974*).

In the months following Internment the Six Counties were plunged into warfare on a scale not experienced since 1921. Nationalists put up barricades in virtually every Catholic area. In the 'no-go' areas of Belfast and Derry the IRA operated as a virtual provisional government. A group of Belfast women launched a rent and rate strike which took off throughout the Six Counties; by the end of the year more than 23000 families were refusing to pay their bills to the state. The war itself acquired a new ferocity: 30 soldiers and 11 members of the local security forces were killed within four months of Internment. The IRA's extensive bombing campaign showed that its military capability was on the increase.

The upward spiral of violence in the aftermath of Internment had a profound impact on the British ruling class. The more far-sighted British politicians now realised that the Six Counties could no longer be ruled in the old way. Two years of mounting chaos convinced them that the very existence of a separate Six County state would continue to provoke nationalist resistance. In December 1971, Tory Home Secretary Reginald Maudling shocked some observers by admitting that the republican movement would 'not be defeated, not completely eliminated, but have their violence reduced to an acceptable level' (*Bowyer Bell*). Maudling acknowledged that British control meant more repression. Accordingly on 30 January 1972 the government ordered the Army to open fire on an unarmed march against Internment in Derry. The slaughter of 14 Catholics on Bloody Sunday was a clear indication of the

content of the Army's new policy of 'maximum repression'.

Bloody Sunday led directly to the fall of Stormont. The outraged reaction throughout Ireland and abroad put the British state on the defensive. Tens of thousands marched in protest against the massacre in Dublin (where the British embassy was burnt down), Belfast and Derry itself, as well as in London and other capital cities around the world. Inside the Six Counties Bloody Sunday precipitated even greater polarisation and conflict. The republican movement went on the offensive and Loyalist politicians mobilised their paramilitary units to defend the British way of life. The Stormont regime could no longer stand the strain; on 24 March 1972 it was dissolved and Direct Rule from Westminster instituted.

Between August 1969 and March 1972 the war developed from sporadic riots into a conflict of arms, bombs and the latest technology of repression. During this period Britain's role as the oppressor of Ireland became increasingly obvious; it culminated in Direct Rule which was the clearest expression yet of British domination. The first three years of open conflict showed that what was at stake was not some obscure religious feud, but a war between oppressor and oppressed. A decade later, the leading voice of the British ruling class reiterated the major lesson of this period:

'If one rules out British withdrawal from Ulster, as we do, the only conceivable alternative that has been put forward is the maintenance of direct rule more or less *sine die*. The trouble with direct rule is that it offers no hope for the future. Its main achievement was once described by a previous Secretary of State as leading to an "acceptable level of violence"....

'Direct rule is thus in many ways a euphemism for military rule.'
(*Financial Times* 25 October 1982)

The destruction of Stormont was a major blow against British imperialism. It meant that British domination could only be enforced through military occupation and the institution that for fifty years had tried to give imperialist oppression a democratic veneer could no longer play any part in disguising it.

Living with Direct Rule

Direct Rule brought all aspects of social, economic and political life in the Six Counties under the control of Westminster. This was essential if Britain was to retain control. But Direct Rule itself could not solve the underlying problems: the liberation struggle still raged and, to make matters worse for Britain, Loyalist gangs also extended their activities to seek revenge for the loss of Stormont. In March 1972 a successful one-day Loyalist strike backed by the Ulster Defence Association added to the climate of instability.

Squeezed from both sides, British strategists seemed to have run out of plans. Until the middle of 1974 the authorities floundered, seeking at one moment a negotiated compromise, at another attempting to set up a revamped version of Stormont, and again going all out for coercion. In the summer of 1972 the British government was in such a weak position that it was prepared to hold discussions with the IRA. On 7 July Home Secretary William Whitelaw met a delegation from the republican movement in London. The talks proved

inconclusive. On 9 July, the British Army broke the cease-fire which had accompanied the secret negotiations. In reply, the republican movement announced to the press that its leaders had been discussing with the British government. Embarrassed by these revelations, the Tory administration launched a new offensive to demonstrate that it was still in full control in the Six Counties.

On 24 July Whitelaw announced in the House of Commons that his first priority was to 'destroy the IRA'. A week later 'Operation Motorman' set out to do just that. 'Operation Motorman' was the largest military initiative up to that stage of the war. Its objective was to destroy the 'no-go' areas from which most attacks were launched. It involved 21 000 British troops – the highest concentration ever in the Six Counties. Hundreds of armoured vehicles, landrovers and Scout cars lined up in ranks which were 12 deep in places. At 4am, led by 60 ton specially converted centurion tanks, this juggernaut smashed through the barricades. In Belfast the IRA withdrew in face of overwhelming odds and there was little fighting. In Derry there was considerable resistance and the Army shot two people dead. When it was all over, the ghettos of West Belfast and Derry were like one vast concentration camp. Schools and community centres were turned into local bases and observation posts; perimeter fences and security gates were scanned by closed circuit television and squads of soldiers patrolled in every back-yard and tiny front garden.

Between 1972 and 1974 the British state followed up the relative success of Motorman with further attacks on the nationalist community. The clamp-down on the working class nationalist areas was particularly severe. The number of houses searched quadrupled from 17 262 to 74 919 between 1971 and 1974 (*Belfast Bulletin*, Spring 1982). In 1973 plastic bullets replaced rubber bullets in the armoury of the security forces.

In an attempt to restore its rather tarnished 'fair-play' image, the British state began to pull back the Army from front-line combat. The aim was to disassociate the Army from the more gruesome atrocities necessary to enforce the British way of life on the uncooperative Irish. Army officers maintained an informal relationship with Loyalist murder gangs. More significant was the emergence of covert security units combining the Special Air Services and local forces. Operating under the name of the Military Reconnaissance Force, these units unleashed a reign of terror in 1972. The assassinations continued into 1973 and by the middle of the year rumours began to filter through to the media that Army operations were directed specifically at killing the 'top thirty' IRA leaders (*The Times*, 17 May 1973). Six unarmed IRA men were murdered in February and another one in May. *The Guardian* reported that two criminals – the Littlejohn brothers – had been hired to assassinate prominent IRA militants, including its Chief of Staff (9 August). What everyone suspected all along was finally admitted publicly in March 1974. *The Times* reported that SAS units were operating in the Six Counties. This was the first time that such operations had been launched within the 'United Kingdom'. The report noted that 'the political implications of bring-

ing the SAS into Northern Ireland are enormous' and proudly boasted of the ability of the SAS 'to kill swiftly and silently behind enemy lines' (19 March 1974).

Undercover intelligence work increased enormously during this period. The scale of the operations was made public in August 1974. *The Observer* reported that every soldier in the Six Counties was being trained in routine intelligence work. Up to 20 per cent of any battalion could be involved in full-time intelligence work at any one time (11 August 1974).

Whitelaw's policy of dirty tricks and maximum brutality achieved a number of successes but it singularly failed to restore order. The British government realised that it could not rely on oppression alone because that would expose too starkly its oppressive role in the Six Counties. To give British rule a semblance of legitimacy Whitelaw began to search for alternative forms of control. The Tories granted a number of minor concessions to encourage the collaboration of the SDLP; Whitelaw even dropped hints about ending Internment. In March 1973 the government announced plans for a new 'power-sharing' assembly and executive. The idea was to create a middle ground of moderate opinion which could help extricate Britain from its direct involvement. The Sunningdale Conference of December 1973 added to the proposed assembly a 'Council of Ireland', a talking-shop with representatives from both North and South, as a further concession to the SDLP. The assembly met, the executive was chosen. By mid-1973 the quest for the middle ground seemed about to yield results.

In fact the assembly never had a chance. It was unrepresentative of both the nationalist and Loyalist communities. Indeed the rhetoric which launched the assembly only frightened Loyalists whose one concern was to cling on to their privileges; the last thing they wanted was any 'power-sharing' with Catholics. The leadership of the Loyalist community united to destroy the assembly. In May Loyalist paramilitaries organised the successful Ulster Workers Council strike which paralysed the Six Counties within days and dealt a death blow to the assembly. The middle ground disappeared never to return.

The defeat of the 'power-sharing' assembly set a precedent for future political initiatives. Numerous attempts from the constitutional convention in 1975 to the Tory 'rolling devolution' scheme of 1982 – show that the prospects for a new Stormont, however reformed, are very dim. The conflict of interest between British imperialism and the nationalist community cannot be resolved through assemblies or constitutions. The Loyalist dimension further complicates matters – even the most modest reforms threaten to provoke a Loyalist backlash and thus exacerbate 'the troubles'.

When the new Labour Government assumed office in 1974 the war had reached a stalemate. The republican movement was strong enough to inflict embarrassing blows against British imperialism but lacked the means to defeat its Army. The British Army and other security forces were sufficiently organised and equipped to prevent a complete collapse of the Six County state. But they were not in a position to turn the tables against the IRA. It

was left up to the new Labour administration to come up with the most sophisticated strategy ever devised to destroy the movement for Irish liberation.

2 'Ulsterisation'

Between 1974 and 1979, the Labour Government devised a policy of containment designed to isolate and crush the IRA. Northern Ireland Minister Merlyn Rees, and his successor Roy Mason, were committed to the policy of maximum repression. But they also wanted a policy which would endow British imperialism with moral authority and pin the blame for 'the troubles' on the IRA. Their solution was 'Ulsterisation'. The essence of 'Ulsterisation' was the replacement of British troops by 'Ulster' policemen. It aimed to localise the conflict and extricate British troops from direct public involvement.

Hand in hand with 'Ulsterisation' went 'normalisation' and 'criminalisation'. In the United Kingdom it is not normal to have soldiers on the streets; police, however, are normal. Wars of liberation are not normal either, but crime and punishment are normal features of the British way of life. Hence the British propaganda machine labelled the war a conflict between criminals and the police. The success of 'Ulsterisation' rested on the government's success in branding Irish freedom fighters as criminals. Appeals to law and order and denunciations of criminals provided a framework for legitimising the British occupation of Ireland.

On 4 April 1974 Rees explained the new strategy to the House of Commons. He began by stating the basic commitment of the British state, that the 'overriding consideration must always be that of security'. But, as the Minister explained, security is a political question:

'The cornerstone of security should be a progressive increase in the role of the civilian law enforcement agencies in Northern Ireland. . . .

'Sufficient numbers of the Army would remain in Northern Ireland to assist in maintaining law and order. But the government believed that in the long term it must be the community itself and normal police activities, not military operations alone, which would finally defeat the terrorist.'

Rees' emphasis on a return to a 'normal political life' meant that every step possible would be taken to make the streets of the Six Counties appear as normal as those of his Leeds constituency. Rees went as far as to legalise Sinn Féin. He countered criticism from Loyalist politicians by arguing that it was a gamble well worth taking. Anything that could help defuse military resistance was worth a try.

The government abolished Internment in 1975 as part of its continuing campaign to restore normality. Internment was no longer necessary, because the policy of 'criminalisation' was now fully operative. The withdrawal of special category status from Irish prisoners of war in 1976 meant that they would be treated as ordinary criminals. A crude but efficient system of judicial terror, consisting of no-jury courts and convictions obtained on the

basis of confessions extracted through torture, provided the framework for criminalising the resistance movement. The number of prisoners soon far outnumbered those detained under Internment. In 1975 the RUC held and tortured 320 people; in 1976 the figure more than doubled to 708 and by the first quarter of 1977 it was 904. The number of prisoners increased from 1644 in 1973 to 3450 by the middle of 1977 (*Northern Ireland Digest of Statistics*, September 1977, *Irish Times*, 9 June 1977, *The Times*, 26 July 1977). The system of judicial violence provided the security forces with a considerable amount of hard intelligence and eventually forced the IRA to reorganise its operational units.

'Criminalisation' was accompanied by a determined effort to make out that life on the streets of the towns and cities of the Six Counties was slowly returning to normal. Every few weeks Roy Mason announced that the IRA was on the run. He launched plans to rebuild the economy, schemes for housing and other community projects. Even the RUC received a face-lift. The sectarian boot-boys began to operate youth clubs and organise 'Blue Lamp discos'. An RUC officer explained the rationale behind the new image:

'(RUC community workers) continually emphasise that they are policemen first and community relations officers second, and the Community Relations Branch is just another specialised unit which a modern police force requires if it is to serve the community properly by reducing or preventing crime and helping to produce responsible citizens.' (*Ulster Commentary*, May 1975)

'Criminalisation' and 'normalisation' are familiar counter-insurgency techniques. Whether they work depends on the extent to which the unruly colony is really getting back to normal.

Local security forces

During the 'seventies the total size of the Loyalist security forces increased from 10 955 to 19 287. The Labour Government clearly intended that the RUC and the UDR should move into the front line of the war. But these units could not replace the Army by force of numbers alone. They had to be trained and equipped to carry out these responsibilities. In September 1973, Englishman Kenneth Newman was made deputy chief constable of the RUC. Over the next three years he established the framework for 'Ulsterisation'. The RUC's intelligence operations were improved and its weapons were updated. Newman streamlined and reorganised the RUC's operational procedures.

But it wasn't just sophisticated technology that improved the RUC's effectiveness. The arbitrary powers granted by the Emergency Powers Act of 1973 and the Prevention of Terrorism Act of 1974 allowed the RUC to oversee a system of detention, torture and conviction in no-jury courts. Newman's reorganisation meant the construction of a systematic instrument of terror.

In July 1976 the Labour Government announced plans for restoring the 'primacy of the police'. In practice the extension of the role of the RUC

meant that it would concentrate on the collection and collation of criminal intelligence. A second aspect of the RUC's increased profile was its development of selective hard policing. On the basis of RUC intelligence, chosen targets were picked up, beaten into submission and shunted down the 'conveyor belt' to prison. The treatment meted out to such prisoners in Castle-reagh interrogation centre is well documented. In 1976 875 complaints of assault were made against the RUC, double the figure for 1975. To aid this side of its work, the Six Counties' Special Patrol Group was reorganised in 1977, to give each police district its own special assault squad. The new Divisional Mobile Support Units were highly trained and mobile.

Brutal attacks on selected individuals went together with a much softer approach towards the nationalist community as a whole. The number of houses raided fell dramatically from 34039 in 1976 to 4106 in 1980 (*Belfast Bulletin*, Spring 1982). House searches were replaced by the 'screening of civilians' allowed under the RUC's extensive powers of stop and search. This double-edged policing was given the seal of British approval in January 1977 when formal responsibility for security in the Six Counties was handed over to the RUC.

The increased public exposure of the RUC did not mean that 'Ulsterisation' was really being implemented. The Army remained in strength. The only difference was that now most of the repression was carried out behind the scenes – through Loyalist paramilitaries, covert Army units and detentions. In 1976 the SAS unleashed a reign of terror in Armagh designed to destroy the IRA command structure. One SAS officer boasted of the success of the assassination squads in dealing with the top 10 local IRA leaders: 'We got four of them; the other six were chased down South' (T Geraghty, *Who dares wins*). From late 1977 to late 1978 selective murders were stepped up. The most infamous was the summary execution of a three-man IRA unit on 21 June 1978. An undercover team of SAS and RUC assassins surrounded Jim Mulvenna, Jackie Mealey and Dennis Brown. They pumped more than 200 rounds into their victims, also wounding passers-by – one fatally.

In a speech reasserting his determination to 'capture' and 'nail' the leaders of the IRA, Mason proudly announced that the size of the SAS and other covert units would be increased. Mason declared that henceforth those 'conspiring' to murder would receive life imprisonment (instead of 10 years) and 10 years (rather than five) for membership of the IRA (*Financial Times*, 9 June 1977). Soon Mason's 'normalisation' policies were getting results. The prison system became one of the Six Counties few growth industries. In 1972, before Newman's arrival, there were 555 prison officers in the Six Counties. By 1978 that number rose to 2339 (*Belfast Bulletin* Spring 1982). Private firms supplying security guards – often financed by the state – also mushroomed in the same period.

Mason's strategy had further consequences. With hundreds of volunteers either dead or behind bars, the IRA was forced to tighten up its structure and reorganise its service units into a cell-type organisation. Mason rejoiced



Kenneth Newman's views on allegations of torture

'In recent months I have found it necessary to issue instructions to the force warning them that they must take precautions to prevent self-inflicted injuries by prisoners. There have been instances of prisoners wounding themselves with eating utensils, a nail, a tin of lemonade or by butting their heads against a wall or smashing a window.'

(*Irish Times*, 24 June 1977)





Nationalist women march demanding political status for republican prisoners

Philip Wolmuth

over the decline of IRA military initiatives and often told the press that the IRA was on the run. He was soon forced to eat his words.

The reorganisation of the IRA and the emergence of the INLA led to the renewal of the bombing campaign in November 1978. This was followed up by a series of engagements in 1979, the most spectacular of which were the assassination of leading Tory Airey Neave, Lord Mountbatten and the shooting of 18 British soldiers at Warrenpoint. However, in general, the stalemate on the military plane which preceded 'Ulsterisation' continued. Nothing lasting had been achieved in the drive to destroy the IRA. A secret British Army document captured by the IRA in 1979 appreciated the resilience of British imperialism's No. 1 enemy:

'The Provisionals' campaign of violence is likely to continue while the British remain in Northern Ireland. We see little prospect of political development of a kind which would seriously undermine the Provisionals' position.' (*An Phoblacht/Republican News*, 10 May 1979)

The Army document only confirmed what everybody in the Six Counties already knew. In 1980 more than 31000 security personnel were tied down in the Six Counties – 'normalisation' was as far away as ever.

The struggle against 'criminalisation'

In addition to its military aspects, 'Ulsterisation' had an important ideological component. It was designed to isolate the IRA and legitimise British rule in Ireland. The idea was to emphasise the criminal character of the IRA and to portray British troops as the true defenders of justice and democracy. Although the strategy had little prospect of convincing members of the nationalist community that their friends and relations were criminals, Mason hoped that this version of the war would influence international opinion, and in particular the British public.

Because of the central importance of 'criminalisation' to the whole British strategy, it was inevitable that the nationalist community would challenge it. The withdrawal of special category status in 1976 provided the focus for one of the most dramatic campaigns of the Irish War. In January 1976 the republican movement stated that Irish prisoners of war would not accept this change in their status as it represented a denial of the legitimacy of the national liberation struggle. Two months later the Belfast Brigade of the IRA announced that the personnel of the British prison service would henceforth be regarded as legitimate targets (*Republican News*, 20 March 1976). Inside the concentration camps the prisoners joined the struggle. On 14 September 1976, Kieran Nugent became the first republican to be denied special category status. His refusal to wear prison uniform launched the blanket protest campaign. By spring 1978 there were nearly 300 men 'on the blanket'. The protest in the H-Blocks was joined by women political prisoners in Armagh jail.

The protest against the withdrawal of special status received widespread support in the nationalist community. The Relatives Action Committee

organised protest marches in 1978 and 1979. Inside the prisons conditions deteriorated and the conflict between the republican prisoners and the authorities became more and more intense. On 10 October 1980 the prisoners in the H-Blocks announced their intention of launching a hunger-strike to restore political status:

'We demand, as of right, political recognition and that we be accorded the status of political prisoners. We claim the right as captured combatants in the continuing struggle for national liberation and self-determination. We refute most strongly the term 'criminal' with which the British have attempted to label us and our struggle.' (*Irish Times*, 11 October 1980)

The first wave of hunger-strikes was called off after 33 days before any prisoners had died. When promised concessions failed to materialise the prisoners launched the second wave of hunger-strikes on 1 March 1981. This lasted until 3 October and led to the death of 10 hunger-strikers. The hunger-strikers – and the response they received – destroyed 'criminalisation' once and for all.

The hunger-strikers could not achieve their objective of winning political status. But their struggle inspired tens of thousands throughout the world. In Ireland – North and South – a new generation of youth joined the struggle for political status and Irish freedom. When one of the hunger-strikers, Bobby Sands, was elected to Westminster on 9 April 1981 in Fermanagh-South Tyrone 'criminalisation' lay in shreds. In one area of the Six Counties – outside Belfast, Derry and South Armagh – 30 492 people went out and voted to make one simple point to the British Parliament: in their eyes Bobby Sands was no criminal. On 11 June, voters in the Twenty-six Counties elected two blanket men to the Dail in Dublin – Paddy Agnew and Kieran Doherty – in the general election. And after the death of Bobby Sands, his election agent Owen Carron was elected in August for the same seat, on a straightforward 'support the prisoners' demands for political status' ticket. The prisoners' electoral victories and massive demonstrations of public support and sympathy throughout the Six Counties showed the world the continued commitment of the nationalist community to the struggle for national liberation. Only inside Britain could the lie that republican prisoners were criminals receive any degree of popular approval.

Despite all the resources, sophisticated technology and repression behind it, Mason's strategy failed on both the military and the ideological level. By the end of the hunger-strikes the British state was back to square one. It could not break the stalemate but only hope that the 'acceptable level of violence' would not be too high. Before we move on to look at the present situation, let's look more closely at what an 'acceptable level of violence' means for the people on the receiving end of it.

3 The other war

The nationalist community faces violence not only from the state security forces but also from Loyalist paramilitary murder gangs. The Ulster Defence

Association, the Ulster Volunteer Force, Red Hand Commandos and other front organisations have been harassing, torturing and murdering Catholics since the mid-'sixties. On occasions these activities have gone too far and the British government has been obliged to denounce them. But in general they have played a valuable role as auxiliaries of the imperialist security forces.

It is common for the British media and even sections of the left to label the republican movement and the Loyalist paramilitaries as equally 'sectarian'. The reality of the Six Counties contradicts this superficial opinion. The nationalists identify the British state and its agents as responsible for the repression which Irish people face. The republican movement directs its attacks on British soldiers, policemen and prison officers. All of them are armed representatives of the British state and are regarded as legitimate targets.

There have been isolated cases of sectarian assassination of Protestants by Catholics: the killing of 10 Protestant workers at Bessbrook in County Armagh in 1976 is the best known example. But such incidents are exceptional and always responsive to Protestant attacks: five Catholics were killed in South Armagh the day before Bessbrook. The republican movement has always rejected the policy of sectarian attacks. The Loyalist paramilitaries, however, exist solely to organise the random murder of Catholics.

Loyalist anger over bad housing, poverty and unemployment cannot turn against the British state. The Loyalists rely on this alliance with Britain for what houses and jobs they have. This anger thus turns on those who threaten British rule. Thus while nationalists hate the British state, Loyalists simply hate all Catholics. The paramilitaries are the extreme expression of the sectarian outlook which permeates Loyalism.

According to figures compiled by *Silent Too Long*, an organisation of the families of victims of British terror, Loyalist paramilitaries have killed almost 650 Catholics. The ferocious brutality with which these murders are carried out is the hallmark of Loyalist sectarianism. Their victims, usually randomly selected, are often tortured before being killed. Bodies have been recovered with eyes gouged out or covered in innumerable scars. The object of these barbarities is to terrorise the Catholic population as a whole. The paramilitaries also conduct general harassment and intimidation of the nationalist community. In the early years of the war, they forced thousands of Catholics to move out of mixed residential areas. In the first few years of the war between 30 000 and 60 000 people were estimated to have moved home in Greater Belfast alone. Eighty per cent of them were Catholics (*The Times*, 4 August 1973).

The reaction of the British security forces to Loyalist violence is quite different from its treatment of republicans. Many known Loyalist murderers are allowed to walk the streets safely. Thus Lenny Murphy, the leader of the notorious 'Shankill butchers', who carved 19 Catholics to death between November 1975 and March 1977 was never charged with any of these murders. Murphy's leading role was well known and it was left to the IRA to mete out justice: he was shot dead in late 1982.

The links between the British state and the paramilitaries go much further than turning a blind eye to murder. There is a tradition of dual membership between British forces and Loyalist gangs. The original Ulster Volunteer Force became a regiment in the British Army during the First World War. Today many members of the UDR and RUC are active in the UDA and UVF.

The Army and security forces make good use of the Loyalist paramilitaries in their under-cover operations. Belfast UDA leader Tommy Herron met with detectives regularly in 1972 and 1973. A policeman gave Herron a gun which was later used to murder Catholics (J Holland, *Too long a sacrifice*). During 1972 Captains Anthony Ling, Anthony Box and Lieutenant Alan Horner, all of the 39th Brigade Intelligence at Lisburn, maintained close contact with Jim Hanna, a leading figure in the UVF (*Belfast Workers Research Unit Bulletin*, No 2, 1977). When the links between security forces and paramilitaries are occasionally exposed, the courts are extraordinarily lenient with the murderers. In spring 1980 a group of RUC men were brought to trial in Belfast for a series of crimes. Two of them – Sergeant John Weir and Constable William McCaughey – were charged and convicted of murdering a Catholic shopkeeper. Although Weir and McCaughey received life imprisonment, the other policemen were let off with suspended sentences. The judge summed up the trial by stating that the murder was 'understandable' but 'inexcusable' (Holland).

The close cooperation between the security forces and the Loyalist paramilitaries is sometimes strained by conflicts over how much violence to use against the nationalist community. Unlike the paramilitaries, the British state has to contend with international public opinion and maintain its 'peace-keeping' facade. Often when it appears that Britain is going 'soft' on the 'taigs', the Loyalist murder gangs go on the rampage. This strategy was explained in the UVF's journal in 1974:

'There is no essential moral difference between official government action and unofficial Loyalist action in the struggle against terrorism and subversion...in the event of political weakness on the part of the government leading to ineffective security measures, the UVF upholds the right to take such effective measures as it may, from time to time, consider necessary for the defeat of terrorism, aggression and insurrection.' (Combat, No 33, 1974)

The result of this division of labour is clear. The two years in which Loyalist murder squads were busiest were 1975 (150 murders) and 1976 (175 murders). These were the years in which Britain negotiated long cease-fires with the IRA. The repression which accompanied the policy of 'Ulsterisation' satisfied the UVF and the UDA and the paramilitaries withdrew into the background. But their guns are greased and they remain at the ready to act as legal auxiliaries to the British forces of repression.

The republican movement followed up its successful campaign against 'criminalisation' in the October 1982 elections for the new Assembly established by Tory Northern Ireland Minister James Prior. Sinn Fein won five seats (on an abstentionist ticket), once again demonstrating widespread

Catalogue of murder RUC style



Gervais McKerr

- Shot dead by the RUC at a roadblock near Lurgan: 11 November 1982
- Around 50 rounds fired at their car
- RUC claims it opened fire on the car as it drove away from the check point 'in an attempt to escape'
- No weapons were found in the victims' car

The three victims were members of the IRA. In January 1977 shots were fired at McKerr's home. In February his car was booby-trapped. A friend of McKerr, who was detained by the RUC detectives in Gough Barracks in January 1983 was told 'we'll do you the way we did him – from head to foot'.

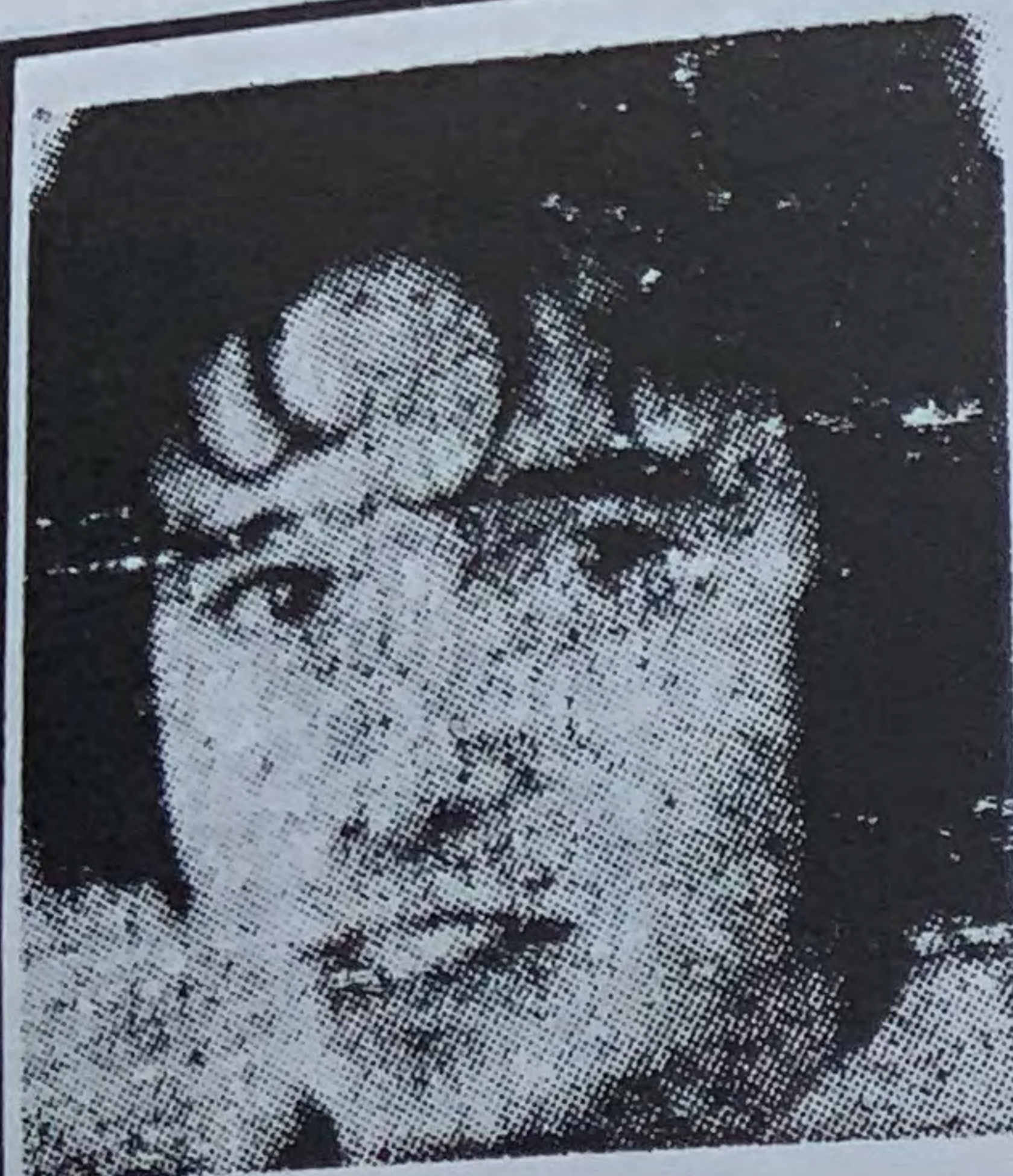
The Lurgan Official Unionist Association congratulated the RUC on the way it had 'handled' the 'incident'.



Eugene Toman



Sean Burns



Roddy Carroll



Seamus Grew

●Shot dead by the RUC at Mullaghcreevie Estate outside Armagh: 12 December 1982

●RUC claim that the car went through a roadblock

●No weapons found in the victims' car

These two INLA members faced considerable police harassment in October and November. Grew had twice approached the local priest about threats to his life from RUC officers. On 19 November, Grew and Carroll asked a passing driver to bring a priest to a UDR roadblock where they were held and threatened.



Michael Tighe

●Ambushed by the RUC at a farmhouse near Lurgan: 24 November 1982

●Tighe killed immediately

●RUC claimed that they came across Tighe who aimed a rifle at them

●The RUC later produced three ancient rifles with no ammunition

support for the armed struggle in the nationalist community.

4 War as usual

The recession is ravaging the Six Counties. Official unemployment rates are creeping up to 30 per cent as one factory after another goes into liquidation. These grim statistics threaten to heighten tensions even more inside the Six Counties. Economic collapse creates a social climate which limits the policy options open to the British state.

The government's latest attempt to establish some sort of devolved government has shared the same fate as its predecessors. Although the Assembly still exists it commands no public respect, especially among Catholics who have no representatives at all in it. Prior's failure can only serve to underline the fact that there is no alternative to Direct Rule. This lesson has been grasped by all significant sections of the British ruling class. One of the more acute bourgeois commentators on Ireland, T E Utley recently advised Margaret Thatcher to pursue 'the policy of treating Ulster as a normal part of the Kingdom', in other words maintain Direct Rule (*Daily Telegraph*, 18 February 1983).

Direct Rule means military rule. The British state has realised that for the time being its campaign to isolate the IRA and win 'the hearts and minds' of the nationalist community is a waste of time. Utley appreciates that the nationalist community is solidly against British rule: 'As for Catholic alienation generally, there is no evidence that the absence of Internment is doing much good. The police do not find it conspicuously easier to find witnesses prepared to testify against terrorists in courts than they ever did' (*Daily Telegraph*, 18 February 1983).

Since the Assembly elections British imperialism has adopted a policy of out and out repression. Prior's first reponse to Sinn Fein's success was to find an extra £14 million to boost RUC numbers by almost 1000. Then he unleashed the Army/RUC special squads in an orgy of selective assassinations. Within weeks the shoot-to-kill campaign had claimed the lives of 11 unarmed Catholics.

In December 1982 top RUC sources confirmed that its covert anti-terrorist units were engaged on a shoot-to-kill policy (*Irish Times*, 22 December). This time the security forces did not even bother to pretend that they were involved in anything other than selective assassination. On 2 February 1983, plainclothed soldiers burst into a flat in Derry and shot dead INLA volunteer Niall McMonagle and seriously wounded Liam Duffy. They then retreated leaving the bodies in a pool of blood. The message was clear — all republican activists are potential targets! The shoot-to-kill policy is only one part of the build up of repression. In the weeks following McMonagle's murder the security forces launched a series of raids on houses in nationalist estates in Derry and Belfast.

The shoot-to-kill policy has been strongly supported by Loyalist politicians. Commenting on the assassinations of republicans in Armagh, Ian Paisley demanded more of the same: 'I do not think it was wrong for those police

officers to deal with the IRA men recently in County Armagh. I do not think it was wrong for the same action to be taken in Londonderry and I would like to see these actions repeated across the province' (*Magill*, February 1983).

The latest British murder campaign has made the situation in the Six Counties more explosive than at any time since 1974. One victim of the increased polarisation has been the SDLP, traditionally Britain's only friend inside the nationalist community. The growing hatred of the nationalist community for Britain has forced the SDLP onto the defensive. The Belfast magazine *Fortnight* summed up the party's predicament;

'At the moment the SDLP are on a hiding to nothing; they know that their grass roots will desert them in droves for Sinn Fein if they make any moves towards the Assembly as presently constituted; their Council for a New Ireland is a non-starter. . . and they have little hope of outbidding the Provos to become the standard-bearers of hard line nationalism.' (6 January 1983)

The decline of the SDLP reflects the growing support for the republican movement. As the war moves into its fourteenth year the national liberation movement continues to defy imperialist oppression.

The present policy pursued by the Thatcher Government provides no solution for British imperialism. Indeed it is likely to provoke more shootings and bombings of British targets. All that Thatcher can do is attempt to contain the resistance and do her best to prevent the war from overflowing into Britain and the Twenty-six Counties.

The republican movement will not go away. Repression breeds resistance and as long as Ireland remains divided the struggle will continue. Despite the ravages brought by more than thirteen years of war the nationalist community has not lost the will to fight. It has no choice but to resist British oppression: the IRA and INLA have stood up against the most sophisticated counter-insurgency force in the world.

However as long as the national liberation struggle remains restricted to the Six Counties, the military stalemate will not be broken. The success of the national liberation movement depends on winning mass support in the Twenty-six Counties and in Britain. For nearly fourteen years the nationalist community in the Six Counties has fought more or less alone. These years of sacrifice must not be in vain. Workers in Britain have a special responsibility to do everything in their power to hasten the defeat of the military machine of their own ruling class. Extending the war beyond the borders of the Six Counties is vital for the victory of the Irish people.

4. Judicial terror

The British Army justifies its presence in Ireland on the grounds that it defends law and order. The government, the press and the Army itself all go to great pains to preserve this 'peace-keeping' image. *The Times* recently warned that the security forces cannot afford to be seen to be acting outside the framework of the law:

'For if suspicion were converted into belief, and belief into knowledge, that the civil power in Northern Ireland has resorted to countering the armed subversion of lawful order by its own perversion of lawful means, then not only would the confidence of the nationalist community be lost for ever, the moral basis for Britain's presence in the Province would vanish.' (5 January 1983)

The Times need not worry. In the Six Counties the law operates in such a flexible way that virtually any crime committed by the security forces is interpreted as legal. The number of prosecutions arising from 255 murders by the security forces is in the single figures. Three soldiers are serving a prison sentence for the murder of a man and his wife — they were charged and convicted after one of them made a confession following his return to Britain. In one instance, a soldier prosecuted on a murder charge was acquitted. The soldier wrongly believed that he had shot an IRA member. However, the belief that his victim was a republican was sufficient for the Courts to rule that 'the force used' was not 'unreasonable' (B Trench, 'Death by ambiguity', *Magill*, February 1983).

The law is an important weapon in Britain's arsenal. Before we turn to examine the use of the law in the war it is useful to outline the peculiarities of the legal system in the Six Counties.

Colonial law

Although the Six Counties are a part of the 'United Kingdom' the legal system there betrays their status as a colony. Repression extends beyond legal discrimination against the nationalist community. It is justified through appeals to prejudices which prevail in all spheres of society. The Loyalist establish-

ment views modest legal reforms as a threat to the status quo. Thus many legal reforms passed in Westminster have never been enacted in this corner of the 'United Kingdom'. The British government has rarely sought to impose legal changes against Loyalist resistance in the Six Counties.

Between Partition and the outbreak of the war in 1969, the only legal measure that Britain imposed in face of Loyalist opposition was the National Assistance Act of 1948, which established the framework for the welfare state. It was passed, despite vehement opposition from Unionist MPs, because Westminster saw it as a useful means for preserving social stability. The Act did little to disturb the existing political relations. Indeed, the growth of the welfare state turned out to be useful in providing jobs and services to keep Loyalist workers in line.

Legal reforms in Britain which implied a challenge to Loyalist ideology have largely been kept out of the Six Counties. Most of these measures were introduced from the late 'sixties up to the mid-'seventies, when the last benefits of the post-war boom allowed the state to implement a few reforms. Reforms concerning the legal position of women and the family met the fiercest Loyalist resistance.

The Loyalist commitment to the Protestant way of life elevates religion to a state philosophy. The cross-class alliance on which Loyalist control rests requires continuous vigilance over morality, the celebration of the family unit and the assertion of the subordinate role of women in society. British laws which the Loyalist establishment has successfully kept out of the Six Counties include the 1967 Abortion Act. In Britain the main aim of this legislation was to prevent the few thousand women the state considered incapable of motherhood from having children. In the Six Counties even that was far too much. The illegality of abortion has a vital role to play in social control, uniting the Loyalist community around an issue on a higher plane than diverging class interests.

The 1975 Children's Act proposed to establish a comprehensive adoption service. This too was repugnant to Loyalism; even the illegitimate offspring of Protestants had to be guaranteed a Protestant upbringing. It has never been introduced into the Six Counties. Other reforms of the late 'sixties and 'seventies have reached the Six Counties late, often in a diluted or distorted form. Their eventual introduction coincided with Britain's attempts at 'normalising' the Six Counties which included bringing the law into line with the rest of the 'United Kingdom' and the EEC. The 1969 Divorce Reform Act arrived in the Six Counties in 1978, without the original provision for postal divorces. The 1976 Domestic Violence and Matrimonial Proceedings Act took until 1980 to become the Domestic Proceedings Order in the Six Counties. In Britain the Act provided for the exclusion of a violent husband or male cohabitee from their home. Because God-fearing Protestants don't cohabit, Loyalists modified the law to give legal protection only to legally married women.

The most bitter struggle of all concerned the 1967 Sexual Offences Act, which legalised homosexuality for consenting male adults. Attempts to introduce the Act into the Six Counties were met by Ian Paisley's 'Save Ulster

from Sodomy' campaign. The Act was finally brought in as the Homosexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order in October 1982 – 15 years after its introduction in Britain. Paisley's reaction to this setback summed up the Loyalist attitude to liberal legislation. Claiming – probably correctly – that 23 of the 26 councils in the Six Counties opposed the Order, he said that 'the move would attack the family which was the cement of society... Those of us who believe in the moral power of the home must voice their opposition' (*The voice of Ulster*, November 1982).

Laws which might benefit workers – particularly nationalist workers – the detriment of Loyalist landlords or local councils have also not been introduced into the Six Counties. The 1974 Rent Act, which allowed tenants some powers to prevent rent rises, and the 1977 Homeless Persons Act, which gave local authorities a legal duty to provide for the homeless, are two examples.

The fact that Loyalists have resisted legal reform does not mean that Westminster has a progressive role to play in Ireland. It indicates only that imperialist domination stirs up the most reactionary prejudices. British rule in the Six Counties encourages the degrading ideology of Loyalism and its ritual displays of allegiance to the British Crown to pull together a carefully contrived majority in favour of the British connection. A legal apparatus which spews bigotry and prejudice from every courtroom in the Six Counties under the seal of the British monarch is a true monument to Britain's 'progressive' influence in the Six Counties.

Another name for oppression

The legal system of the Six Counties has been specifically refined to institutionalise oppression and maintain Loyalist privilege. Some law – emergency or otherwise – is always at hand to legitimise the repression of the nationalist population. Through the post-Partition years, the 1922 Special Powers Act provided the legal mechanism for terrorising the opponents of the new state. The Special Powers Act was originally introduced as an 'emergency' measure to deal with the republican movement in the early 'twenties. Like all emergency laws in Ireland, it remained in force long after the immediate crisis had passed. It was renewed annually until 1928; then it was renewed for five years. It was made permanent in 1933 and it remained on the statute books for another 40 years.

The Special Powers Act gave Stormont unlimited powers of coercion. It allowed for arrest without warrant, internment without trial, execution, the prohibition of inquests into the cause of death, flogging, the destruction of buildings, the requisitioning of land and property and the prohibition of meetings, organisations and publications. The Minister of Home Affairs was given the authority to delegate the powers of the Act to anyone he felt needed them. A catch-all provision of the Act gave him the power to legislate against anything not specifically dealt with but 'calculated to be prejudicial' to the stability of the Six Counties. Anything the Loyalists needed to contain nationalist opposition could be legitimised under the Act. Internment hung over the nationalists as a constant threat. It was in force between 1922 and

1924, in 1925 and from 1938 to 1946 during the republican campaign in the Second World War. Internment was re-introduced during the IRA's border campaign between 1956 and 1961 and again from 1971 to 1975.

The Special Powers Act was replaced by the Emergency Powers Act in 1973. The new Act was simply a refinement of its predecessor. Within the general framework provided by this repressive legislation, Stormont, and later successive British governments, have adopted a flexible approach to the law in the Six Counties to deal with changing forms of nationalist struggle. In 1933, for example, more than 40 republican activists were detained. Though these individuals were considered a threat to stability, the general level of unrest was not sufficient to justify the introduction of Internment. Using the Special Powers Act 'catch-all' clause, the Minister of Home Affairs created an offence of refusing to answer incriminating questions before a magistrate's court. The detained republicans were all found guilty and sent to prison for breaking a law created after their arrest. Or again, take 1971 when 20 000 nationalists began a rent and rate strike in protest against Internment. Stormont rushed through the Payment of Debts Act to deal with this latest threat to the Orange state. The Act allowed for rent and rate charges to be deducted directly from supplementary benefits. It was later extended to cover electricity and gas charges, and to allow for the removal of money directly from public sector workers' wages. As most Catholics in the Six Counties are either on the dole or working for the state, the Act was on target. In another move to keep the law abreast of the needs of British imperialism, the British Parliament rushed through a one-clause bill in February 1972 which legitimised the Army's brutal methods at a time of open war.

Until the war broke out in 1969, Stormont was left to its own devices in imposing law and order. As late as 1969, the British House of Lords made it clear that it was up to the Loyalists to decide what was 'subversive'. However, after Direct Rule was imposed, the old Loyalist legal machinery seemed outdated. It was too crude and too closely associated with 50 years of discrimination. To find an alternative, the British appointed Lord Diplock to head a commission in 1972.

Concentration camp law

Diplock's brief was to come up with 'arrangements for the administration of justice in Northern Ireland. . . otherwise than by internment by the executive' (*Diplock and the assault on civil liberties*, Haldane Society, 1980). Diplock's recommendations became the 1973 Emergency Powers Act which has been renewed every six months ever since. It was refined and extended further in 1978.

The Emergency Powers Act became central to the strategy of 'Ulsterisation'. Under the Act, internment without trial was still available, but the aim was to make it unnecessary. Diplock's emphasis was on legitimising the mass imprisonment of republicans by maximising the number of convictions gained in the courts. To facilitate this, the new Act established what became

notorious as 'conveyor belt' justice.

Although political status has been officially abolished, the Emergency Powers Act allows for the special treatment of 'scheduled offenders' — that is republican political prisoners. The 'conveyor belt' begins with the detention of these 'offenders' by the police or the Army. The Act allows for an initial detention period of 72 hours. To justify such detention it is only necessary to assert a 'suspicion' that the detainee is involved in a scheduled offence. Unlike other emergency legislation — such as the Prevention of Terrorism Act — the Emergency Powers Act does not stipulate that the suspicion should be 'reasonable'.

Detainees are subjected to brutal interrogations. The object is often solely to extract information and no charges are brought. The Bennett Commission revealed in 1979 that 33.5 per cent of the 2814 people detained between September 1977 and September 1978 were charged. By 1980, while the detentions had increased to 3868, the percentage charged had dropped to 8.6 per cent (*Hansard*, December 1980). For detainees singled out for the 'conveyor belt', interrogations are geared towards obtaining confessions. The Emergency Powers Act established no-jury or Diplock courts. These have become little more than rubber stamps for police 'evidence'. A written confession virtually guarantees conviction by the single judge who presides over these courts. Extracting confessions has become the RUC's top priority. The judiciary is not too concerned about what methods it uses to get them.

The Diplock commission found that the rules regarding the way statements were obtained were 'hampering the cause of justice in the case of terrorist crimes' (*Diplock Report*, paragraph 87). The Emergency Powers Act implicitly accepts the need for torturing detainees to get confessions: psychological torture was explicitly condoned by Diplock. The RUC made the few adjustments necessary to get away with physical torture. The only barrier to this were the Judges Rules, the guidelines for the treatment of prisoners during 'interviews'. During this time as boss of the RUC, Kenneth Newman established two categories of questioning. There were 'interviews' where the Judges Rules would apply, and 'interrogations' where they would not. In the 'interrogation' centres such as Castlereagh, opened in 1977, prisoners suffered beatings, electric shock treatment and sensory deprivation and sometimes death in the drive to force them to sign pre-written confessions. Not surprisingly, many confessed and subsequent conviction rates were high.

The Diplock courts often do not discuss the charges at all. Independent witnesses are rarely present. Interest centres on how much pressure was used to gain the inevitable confession. The onus is on the defendant to substantiate allegations of torture or intimidation. Few have succeeded in doing so to the courts' satisfaction. Sentences are heavy: immediately after the implementation of the Emergency Powers Act the number of prisoners serving more than eight years in prison rose dramatically. Harsh sentencing emphasises the seriousness of the 'crimes', and is intended to act as a deterrent. It has also allowed the state to appear more liberal by granting up to 50 per cent

remission in the Six Counties compared with 33 per cent in Britain. Despite this, prisoners in the Six Counties serve longer on average than those in Britain. More importantly, prisoners can spend an indefinite period of time on remand waiting for their case to come to court. In 1982 the average delay was ten months. One man from South Armagh was finally convicted last September after spending two years and two months in custody. (*Irish Times*, 22 February 1983) In January 1983 300 people were on remand in prisons in the Six Counties. It is not uncommon for charges to be dropped and a prisoner released after several months detention. Thus Internment has effectively been re-introduced.

A recent addition to the state's armoury has been the use of informers or 'super-grasses'. Selected prisoners have been offered financial inducements, promises of 'a new life' abroad and protection for their families. Almost 200 republican suspects were arrested in the first three months of 1982 on the strength of informers' evidence. The problem for the British state has been the tendency for 'super-grasses' to withdraw their evidence in court. Their solution has been to introduce Bills of Indictment which remove the preliminary enquiry stage of the hearing in a magistrates court. This is intended to solve the 'reluctant super-grass' problem by removing the only stage of the proceedings at which defence lawyers could cross-examine them.

In 1976 the British authorities backed up the Emergency Powers Act by extending the Prevention of Terrorism Act to the Six Counties. The main advantage of the Prevention of Terrorism Act is that it allows a maximum of seven days detention without charge compared to the Emergency Powers Act's three-day limit. But the Emergency Powers Act remains at the centre of the system of legal repression. Its concentration on convictions in the courts is a vital part of the attempt to legitimise British rule in Ireland. Labour's Northern Ireland Minister Roy Mason summed up the tissue of lies it is the function of the law to pursue:

'All Northern Ireland courts and the Northern Ireland judiciary are completely independent of government control. . . and they are an integral part of the legal system in the UK. The courts play a fundamental role in the protection of human rights in Northern Ireland. . . No-one is imprisoned for his political beliefs, and there are no political prisoners in Northern Ireland.' (R Mason, *Protecting human rights in Northern Ireland*, February 1979)

The judiciary which Mason is at pains to distance from politics has traditionally been monopolised by reactionary Loyalist politicians. A 1971 study revealed that of the 20 judges appointed to the High Court since Partition, 15 had been influential members of the Unionist Party (*Peace Press*, October/November 1971).

The law is the law even if it is deployed to frame and maim, torture and murder. Anyone who challenges this judicial terror is labelled a criminal. The freedom fighter Bobby Sands was condemned as a criminal and forced to die by the upholders of the law. In a situation where every form of repression can be justified by the state and its judiciary is it any surprise that any Irish man or woman with a shred of dignity is proud to be a law-breaker?

5. The war on the home front

The Irish War is not conducted only in the cities and towns of the Six Counties. The British state is fighting on two fronts — in Ireland and in Britain. To strengthen its hand in Ireland, the British state needs to forge a consensus at home. Domestic consensus is essential to give Britain scope to crush resistance in the Six Counties without any restriction or inhibition. British imperialism has been strikingly successful in its war on the home front. While 'criminalisation' has failed in the Six Counties, it continues to influence public opinion inside Britain.

Since 1969, the British state has been trying to win a war in Ireland whilst pretending that it isn't even fighting one. Hence the media presentation of the war has been a crucial consideration. The political consensus, which extends from right of the Tory Party to the left of the Labour Party, has created an atmosphere in which ruling class propaganda finds mass resonance. Since even the left wing of the labour movement regards the republican movement as a terrorist conspiracy, 'criminalisation' has found widespread acceptance in Britain.

Because the stakes in the Irish War are so high, the ruling class has left nothing to chance. In 1969 the British propaganda machine was unprepared for the outbreak of war. Early media coverage revealed the brutality of the British and Loyalist forces too vividly. In April 1971 the Ministry of Defence assumed responsibility for publicity and the press in the Six Counties. It quickly announced its intention to 'vet' all journalists before granting them access to military briefings. The Army quickly established a monopoly over war news: journalists would simply wait for the military to tell them what was happening. The media dutifully portrayed the soldiers as 'peace keepers'. Most journalists spent more time in the bar of the Hotel Europa than on the streets of Belfast. The republican movement expressed its opinion of the media by turning the Europa into Europe's most-bombed building.

British news coverage of the Irish War entirely supports the establishment. The republican movement's aims and activities are mercilessly caricatured and

distorted. On the other hand, imperialist attacks are presented neutrally and often condoned. Since 'Ulsterisation' there has been a deliberate reduction in war news. Since Roy Mason there has been a deliberate policy of ignoring many of the activities of the resistance movement.

Even liberal criticism of imperialist policy receives short shrift. Television documentaries have been the hardest hit. The Prevention of Terrorism Act has made it illegal to interview members of the IRA. But the PTA is scarcely necessary as all British television channels have been only too ready to impose self-censorship. The broadcasting schedules of the last 13 years are littered with last-minute replacements of 'advertised programmes' on the Six Counties.

Britain's attempts to whitewash its role in Ireland go far beyond controlling the popular media. A series of government reports and inquiries has been commissioned as evidence of the search for an alternative form of rule. The earliest of these (Hunt, Scarman) made criticisms of the RUC's sectarianism during the 1968 and 1969 'disturbances'. By making such criticisms in official reports the state was able to pose as a neutral arbiter in the conflict. Later reports which dealt with the activities of the Army and police made mild criticisms, but always contained a 'let-out' clause for British policy. Sir Edward Compton's 1971 investigation into the treatment of internees concluded that they had not been tortured. Torture, according to Sir Edward, had to be enjoyed by its perpetrators. The troops and RUC men he had spoken to had not enjoyed beating up nationalists, and were therefore innocent of torture.

In 1972, Lord Widgery's investigation into Bloody Sunday reached similar conclusions. It admitted that the 14 dead Catholics had been unarmed and innocent. For Widgery, however, this indicated only that the Army had been 'mistaken' in shooting them; there was no question of murder. More recently, Britain has been found guilty of torture by the European Court of Human Rights. But the liberal political prisoners organisation Amnesty International came to the rescue. Amnesty's 1978 report on the treatment of detainees in Castlereagh interrogation centre distinguished between 'maltreatment' and 'torture'. The RUC had maltreated its prisoners but never tortured them. This revelation was no doubt a relief to those who had suffered at the hands of the 'maltreaters'.

Britain's 'black propaganda' against nationalists has been a feature of the oppression of Ireland for 150 years. Political commentators and cartoonists have been given free rein to illustrate the bestial, sub-human character of those who challenge British rule. This is standard imperialist practice in denigrating oppressed peoples around the world. But the 'black propaganda' aimed against the republican movement is far more sinister than Jak's vicious cartoons in London's evening paper *The Standard*.

In its attempts to create an atmosphere of revulsion amongst the nationalist community, the Army has shot innocent Catholics at random. Undercover units have planted bombs, moved republican explosives to areas where they will cause most damage, and deliberately ignored the IRA's bomb-warnings. Many civilians have died as a result of these attempts to break nationalist support for the armed struggle by portraying the republicans as heartless

killers. Even British propaganda is a murderer in Ireland.

The British state and its allies have been careful to keep the lid on any counter-propaganda to their cause. Thus Irish solidarity demonstrations are banned from London's Trafalgar Square. Special mention must be made of the Trades Union Congress for its services to British rule in Ireland. On several occasions the TUC has clamped down on trades councils who wanted to discuss how to oppose the imperialist policy on Ireland. In February 1983, the TUC intervened to censor an Irish Freedom Movement video entitled 'No British Solution' – we reprint its letter overleaf.

1 The Prevention of Terrorism Act

The Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act was introduced in 1974 and amended and extended in 1976. Up to the end of 1982, 5555 people were detained under the Act – an average of almost two a day. Only 98 of the 5555 detainees – less than two per cent – were charged under the PTA. For many critics of the PTA, this is proof that the Act has been ineffective in catching and convicting 'terrorists'. They are mistaken. The PTA was never meant to convict IRA bombers – existing criminal law is more than adequate. The role of the PTA is to criminalise the republican movement and its supporters and to prevent the emergence of an anti-imperialist movement in England, Scotland and Wales. Convictions are irrelevant. What matters is the creation of a climate of fear – especially inside the Irish community in Britain.

Back in 1979, Labour Home Secretary Roy Jenkins (now the leader of the SDP) explained succinctly why his government introduced the PTA. The object was 'to stem the infection from Ireland' and 'to keep people out, to send people back if they in any way encourage terrorist activity' (Broadcast, November 1974). The pretext for the introduction of the PTA was provided by the Birmingham pub bombings.

On Thursday 21 November 1974 the Mulberry Bush and the Tavern in the Town pubs in Birmingham city centre were wrecked by bombs. The explosions killed 21 people and maimed and injured more than 100 others. Television reports broadcast the carnage into every home in the country. The public outcry over the bombings was quickly matched by the Labour Government. Eight days later the PTA was law. It passed through Parliament without even the formality of a vote. All political parties were unanimous in their approval for what Jenkins admitted to be a 'draconian measure'.

As the post-bombing hysteria died down, tentative questions began to be asked about the haste with which the legislation had been rushed through. Liberal dissent centred on the apparently 'thrown-together', ambiguously worded form of the PTA. In fact there was nothing hasty about the drafting of the PTA. Its mixture of precise definitions and broad, catch-all phrases deliberately left plenty of scope for interpretation. This has given the police the right to do exactly as they want under the authority of the PTA.

The Birmingham bombings were the excuse, not the cause for the introduction of the PTA. Even if the bombs had never gone off the state would have found another pretext for bringing in the Act. The PTA was necessary

to extend the Labour Government's 'Ulsterisation' strategy to Britain. In particular, 'criminalisation' had to be brought into the full view of the British people to consolidate the domestic consensus against the republican movement. On 29 November 1974, after at least 18 months of careful consideration and drafting, the PTA brought 'criminalisation' to the centre of British public attention.

The Prevention of Terrorism Acts of 1974 and 1976 contain three main elements which give the state powers of proscription, exclusion and detention. They are based on the 1939 Prevention of Violence Act, introduced during the IRA's bombing campaign on the eve of the Second World War.

The original PTA gave the Home Secretary the power to proscribe, or ban, any organisation 'appearing' to him to be involved in 'terrorism'. The Act itself named the IRA as proscribed and it became an offence to raise funds, support or hold meetings for the IRA. It soon became clear that this provision, was too specific. It limited the scope for harassing the Irish community in Britain to those directly supporting the republican movement. Potential arrests were missed, and only one conviction obtained — that of a pro-IRA poster-seller in Glasgow in 1975. The supplementary Act of 1976 put this right.

The 1976 Act broadened the state's powers of proscription. It made it an offence for anyone to raise support for 'terrorism' in general, rather than only for named organisations. This is open to police interpretation. Offences under this section can include selling anti-imperialist propaganda or collecting money for the relatives of republican prisoners. The most common 'offence', however, is merely being Irish. Convictions rose accordingly: up to the third quarter of 1982, there were 35 such convictions — 21 of them carrying sentences of more than five years imprisonment.

The second part of the PTA provides the Home Secretary with the powers of exclusion. Anyone the Home Secretary 'believes' to be involved in 'terrorism' can be excluded from 'Great Britain' to 'Northern Ireland'. It was under this clause that a Sinn Fein delegation was prevented from visiting London in December 1982. As a sop to Loyalist complaints that the Six Counties were being used as a dumping ground for undesirables, the 1976 amendment to the Act made provision for exclusion from Northern Ireland to Britain. This provision has never yet been used. The last thing that the British state wants is to force republicans to come to Britain.

Forcing the Irish — whether republican or not — out of Britain is another matter. The threat of exclusion hangs over the heads of all Irish men and women in Britain. It is a reminder that to be treated like British citizens, they have to act like British citizens and accept Britain's right to rule in Ireland. The threat is real. To date 230 people have been removed to the Six Counties, and 37 Irish citizens to the Twenty-Six Counties. The only safeguards against exclusion are to have lived in Britain since birth or continuously for 20 years — excluding any time spent in prison. Exclusion orders can be served without any charges being brought, without any trial or semblance of legal procedure. Such orders cannot be challenged in court. Those who are ordered out can appeal for an oral hearing of their case, which is granted only at the Home

TRADES UNION CONGRESS

CONGRESS HOUSE · GREAT RUSSELL STREET · LONDON WC1B 3LS
Telephone 01-636 4030
Telegrams: TRADUNIC LONDON WCI

Mr D Hallsworth
Secretary
Tameside Trades Union Council

YOUR REFERENCE

OUR REFERENCE
JM/SS/BC
DEPARTMENT
Organisation and
Industrial Relations

14 February 1983

Dear Mr Hallsworth

Film on Northern Ireland

We have been informed that at the December meeting of your Trades Council a film on Northern Ireland was shown.

I understand that this film purported to deal with unemployment in Northern Ireland but also supported the IRA, defended their actions against members of the security forces and the public, and supported allegations of atrocities in the Maze Prison. I also understand that a number of delegates at the meeting objected to the showing of the film and left the meeting.

Before considering this matter further I will be glad to receive from you a full report on the film shown, who produced it, the reasons why it was shown and details of any decision made by the Trades Council relating to the content of the film. Can you also confirm that a number of delegates objected to the showing/content of the film and left the meeting.

I have sent a copy of this letter to the Greater Manchester Association of Trades Councils.

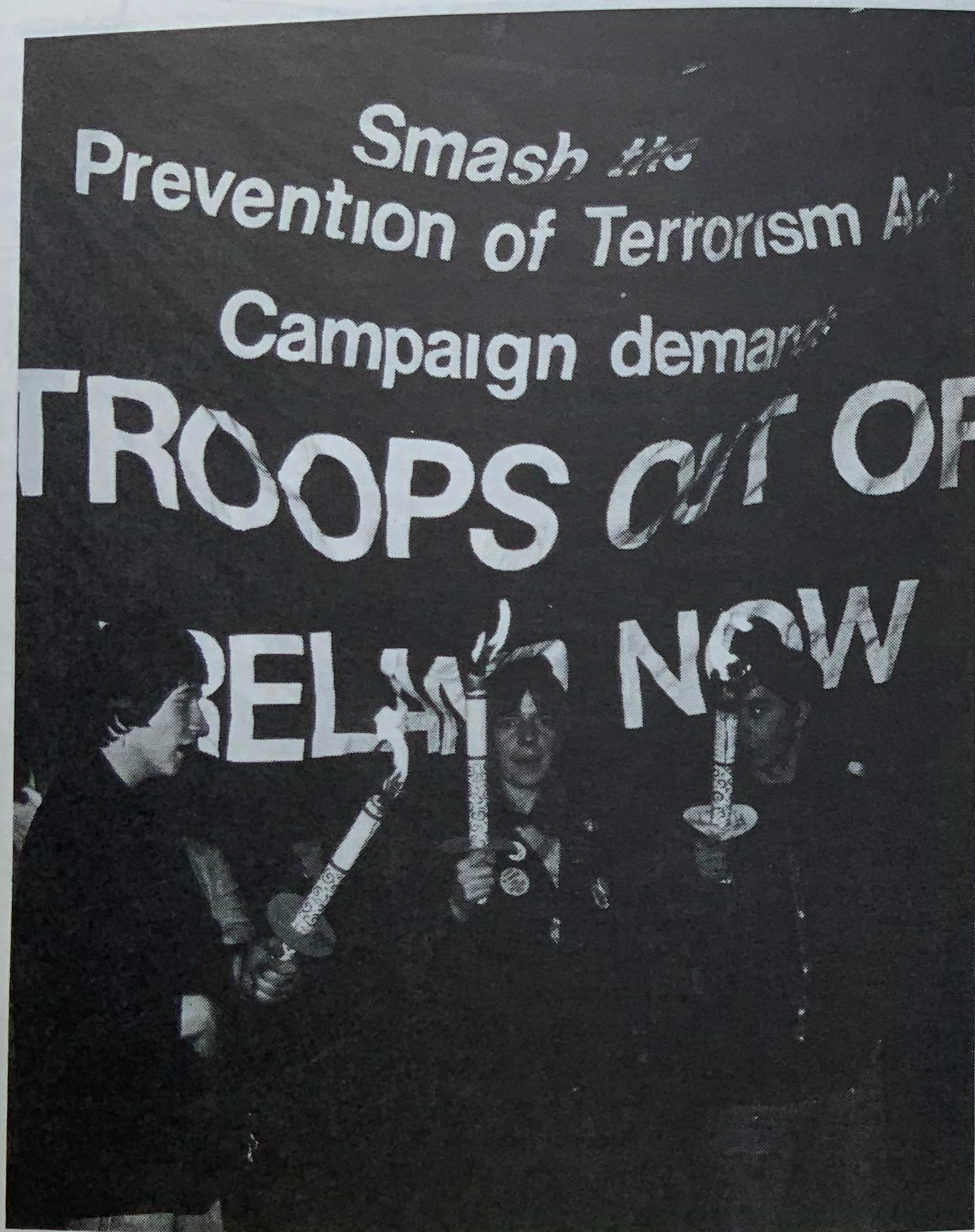
Yours sincerely

John Monks

J Monks
Secretary
Organisation and Industrial
Relations Department

GENERAL SECRETARY: RT. HON. LIONEL MURRAY OBE DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY: NORMAN WILLIS
ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARIES: KENNETH GRAHAM OBE AND DAVID LFA OBE

This letter was the TUC's response to the showing of the Irish Freedom Movement's video 'No British Solution' to a group of trade unionists at a meeting organised by Tameside Trades Council



November 1981 demonstration organised by the Smash the Prevention of Terrorism Act Campaign – the forerunner of the Irish Freedom Movement. In the wake of a bombing campaign, PTA arrests and anti-Irish hysteria, over 400 people marched against British terror and in support of Irish freedom.

Secretary's discretion. Even if they are granted a hearing, the 'defendants' have little chance of winning. They are expected to rebut the allegations made against them without even knowing what they are or from what sources they come. The state justifies the need for such measures with the magic formula of 'national security needs'. If the Irish are concerned about Britain's national security, the story goes, then they will accept these measures as necessary. If they are not concerned about it, then they are precisely the people the Act is aimed at. The state's message to the Irish in Britain is clear: keep your heads down and steer clear of the slightest involvement in your country's liberation struggle, or suffer the consequences.

Part three of the PTA deals with the powers of detention. Under the PTA, arrests can be made without a warrant. Those arrested under the Act can be held for 48 hours without charges being brought against them. When that time is up, the police can apply to the Home Secretary for a further five days detention again without making any charge. Once in custody, a prisoner can be photographed and fingerprinted without consent.

The 1976 Act added another element of legalised terror to detention. It made it an offence not to pass on any information of 'material assistance' in preventing 'acts of terrorism' or catching 'terrorists'. In effect, this removes the defendant's right of silence. If he insists on that right, he could find himself in front of a crown court, facing up to five years imprisonment.

In addition, the PTA gives the police the right to stop and search anyone they suspect of involvement in terrorism. Any premises can be raided on the order of a police superintendent if he judges that 'immediate action is necessary in the interests of the state'. Of course many of these methods are used by the police unofficially to deal with all sorts of crime. But it is the PTA which legitimises them in connection with the war in the Six Counties. Legal niceties can be dispensed with officially when it comes to suppressing any support for Irish freedom.

The 'terrorism'

The PTA defines terrorism as 'the use of violence for political ends (including) any use of violence for the purpose of putting the public or any section of the public in fear'. In practice that definition is strictly qualified. The state admits that the Irish liberation armies use 'violence for *political* ends', but sees no contradiction in labelling convicted 'terrorists' as criminals rather than as political prisoners. The British Army's 'use of violence for political ends' is not covered by the Act. Nor, for most of the time, is the Loyalist paramilitaries' 'use of violence for the purpose of putting... a section of the public in fear'. It is the anti-imperialist violence of the republican movement that the PTA specifically aims to criminalise. In 1974, when the PTA proscribed the IRA, the Ulster Volunteer Force was regarded benignly as having a part to play in 'normalisation'. Hence the UVF was legalised and encouraged to take part in the 1974 elections in the Six Counties. The Irish National Liberation Army was proscribed under the PTA after its assassination of Tory MP Airey Neave. But the Loyalist Ulster Defence Association, respons-

ible for many sectarian murders, remains a legal organisation.

Under the PTA, 'terrorism' means anti-imperialism. Even so, the prime targets of the Act are not the Active Service Units who actually carry out the republican movement's acts of war on the British mainland. Throughout the bombing campaign of 1974 which preceded the Birmingham explosions, the police assured the Labour Government that no special legislation was required to deal with the situation. They were making arrests under the 1833 Explosive Substances Act and the 1968 Firearms Act. The PTA plays only a subsidiary role in dealing with 'terrorists', insofar as it often provides the excuse for the initial arrest. Thus, whilst only 98 people have actually been charged under the PTA, 221 people detained under the Act have later been convicted under other legislation. The PTA's role is to isolate the republican movement from any support or potential support within Britain. Its targets are the Irish community and British anti-imperialists.

The 'prevention'

To keep 'the infection' out the government devotes considerable resources to policing points of entry from Ireland to Britain. More than two-thirds of all detentions under the PTA have taken place at Liverpool, Stranraer and London. The police in these places are particularly efficient Irish-catchers. In Liverpool, where more than a quarter of all detentions take place, there are permanent anti-terrorist squads at the port, the airport and the railway station. The Bridewell police station in the city has specially designed cells for PTA detainees.

Detention at a point of entry brings with it the threat of immediate exclusion. No Irish traveller is safe, although known republicans are the main target. Former internees released in Northern Ireland, who have left for Britain to see their families or take up job offers, have been detained and sent back to the Six Counties. But such cases are less common than the detention and exclusion of Irish people with no known connection with the republican movement. Since the broadening of the terms of the Act in 1976, any short trip home to the Six Counties can be turned into forcible repatriation. In 1980, three Irish men living and working in Barnsley returned to the North for a friend's wedding. On their way back they were detained at Liverpool. Two of them were served with exclusion orders and removed without being allowed access to a solicitor. Cases such as theirs are enough to discourage many Irish residents in Britain from maintaining links with the Six Counties.

Mass raids such as those amongst the Irish communities in London, Southampton, Birmingham and Liverpool in December 1979 have led to the detention under the PTA of people whose only connection with the Six Counties is their birth. During those 1979 raids James Martin was arrested and detained for seven days. Born in the Six Counties, his only safeguard against exclusion would have been 20 years residence in Britain. He had lived here for only 19 years; despite the fact that his three children had been born in Britain, he was banished to the Six Counties. He lost his job and his council house. On arrival in the Six Counties the Housing Executive refused

to rehouse him and his family.

The power of exclusion is also used to good effect in dealing with individuals whom the police suspect of involvement in the war, but against whom they have insufficient evidence to obtain a 'normal' conviction. Edward Forest appeared in Clerkenwell Magistrates Court on 6 January 1976, charged with possessing nitroglycerine. His case was dismissed. As he left the court, he was re-arrested, whisked off to Brixton police station and served with an exclusion order. Two days later he was dumped in Belfast.

None of this should be interpreted as the police 'abusing' their powers under the PTA. They are merely terrorising the Irish community as the Act intended. The state is fully aware of the fact that the majority of those excluded have nothing to do with the Irish War. The RUC has long since given up bothering to detain or question those excluded on their arrival in the Six Counties. The Northern Ireland Office has made it clear that it does not consider the victims of exclusion orders to be responsible for the continued violence in the Six Counties. In Ireland, an excluded person is just another nationalist. But in the context of trying to maintain stability in Britain, any Irish man is an extremist, liable to be excluded to the Six Counties as an example to others.

The power of detention is the most widely used and best known face of the PTA. Pick-ups are carried out in a manner designed to produce maximum intimidation. Victims' doors are kicked in by armed anti-terrorist squad police in the early hours of the morning, their homes are ransacked and their families threatened. Once they are taken into custody, without a warrant, all of the norms of British justice are suspended. Detainees may have their hands swabbed for traces of explosive substances, their fingerprints and photographs will be taken. 'Reasonable force' can be used by the police to obtain any of these. They may be stripped and left naked in a cold and dirty cell, and will almost certainly be denied access to a solicitor. The police have gone to extraordinary lengths to keep PTA detainees away from legal advisors, even lying to solicitors about the times of court appearances.

The police also do their best to ensure that a victim's family and friends are unaware of his detention under the Act. Anti-terrorist squads in Birmingham were infamous for their habit of arresting both husband and wife, regardless of which they were after, so that the other could not get to solicitors or friends for help. Children of detainees have been temporarily put into local authority care so that relatives could be kept in the dark about their parents' arrest.

Meanwhile, the detainee faces intensive interrogation over seven days. Physical threats, denial of sleep or washing facilities, production of false evidence are all used to extract information. Techniques of intimidation are often interspersed with periods of affable conversation, offers of clean clothes, food etc, to break the victim psychologically. Methods of combining inducements with coercion have been refined in the Six Counties where they have been officially sanctioned by Lord Diplock.

Section 10 of the 1976 Act makes it an offence to withhold any inform-

ation about 'terrorism'. In practice this means that unless a detainee acts as a fully cooperative police informant for the entire period of detention, he is liable to prosecution. The police demand not only information about republican activities, but about the social habits and movements of the detainee's acquaintances. Detailed 'evidence' is built-up for possible future use. The intimidation of the Irish community is a continuous and systematic process.

The PTA is used to foster a mood of suspicion and anti-Irish hysteria in Britain which the state depends on for its freedom to act against the Irish people. In response to every bomb attack in Britain, the state and the media go to great lengths to create an image of every Irish man or woman as a potential 'terrorist'. Identikit pictures of suspected bombers are issued; warnings are circulated to be on the lookout for suspicious Irish labourers looking for flats or buying radio parts; public buildings, buses and trains all over Britain are plastered with warning posters about Irish suspects and unattended packages. The PTA lends legitimacy to this treatment of all things Irish as a potential threat to the British people.

Every bombing is followed by raids on the Irish community. After the Chelsea Barracks explosion in October 1981, Larry Quilty and his son were among those picked up. While the anti-terrorist squad smashed their way into his home to arrest his 18 year-old son, Larry Quilty was lifted at 6am at his job in a Westminster Council depot. The arresting officers announced that 'we want to ask you some questions about the bombings the other day', ensuring that his employers and workmates were well aware of the reason for his arrest. He was released without charge after two days of questioning about his political background. His case is a typical example of how the PTA is used to spread suspicion and chauvinist reaction against the Irish among British workers. The raids and arrests are propaganda exercises; the police are well aware that most of the detainees have nothing to do with the war. In 1975 two Irish women visiting St Paul's Cathedral were detained under the Act because they unknowingly parked their car — with a Northern Ireland registration number — near to the Old Bailey, where the Guildford pub-bombing trial was being heard. Their arrest caused a public furore about a possible car-bomb attack on the court. But the police knew better. Throughout their six-day detention, the women were not questioned.

The PTA has also played its part in ensuring that the media present only the British state's view of the Irish War. In 1976, both the BBC and ITV conducted long interviews with the Prisoners Aid Committee about the death of Irish hunger-striker, Frank Stagg, while he was being force-fed at Wakefield jail. When the Labour Government heard about the impending broadcast, it let it be known that a film which revealed the reality of Britain's treatment of Irish political prisoners could be construed as supportive of the IRA. Threatened with prosecution under the PTA, the BBC ditched the project and ITV screened it only after savage editing. In 1980, a BBC film of an IRA roadblock in the Six Counties was referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions for consideration. Attorney-General Sir Michael Havers announced that the government was determined to 'deal with' such coverage of the

Irish War. From the shopfloor to the BBC boardroom the PTA provides the framework for criminalising opponents of the Irish War in Britain.

The critics

The arbitrary character of the PTA and its flagrant violations of elementary civil liberties have provoked criticism from liberal quarters. To accommodate the critics there have been a number of parliamentary reviews of the PTA. The latest was carried out by the Right Honourable Earl Jellicoe, and published in February 1983. It does the usual whitewash job. The most significant recommendation of the *Review of the operation of the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act 1976* is to drop the word 'Temporary' from the title of the Act.

Individual Labour MPs have criticised the PTA on the grounds that its indiscriminate powers breed terrorists rather than frighten them. Labour's Shadow Home Secretary Roy Hattersley, explained why he shifted from being a supporter of the PTA to an opponent:

'The truth of the matter is that in this, as in so many other similar operations the duty of the government is to drive a wedge between the few men of violence and the majority of the law abiding population. My fear is that it now drives the wedge at the wrong point and that many people without sympathy for violence are growing increasingly concerned about its continued existence.' (*Hansard*, 15 March 1982)

Hattersley wants to isolate the 'men of violence' but he does not want to break too many heads in the process.

In February 1983, Hattersley's approach was endorsed by the Labour Shadow Cabinet, which called for the repeal of the PTA. This legalistic opposition to the PTA was largely motivated by the party's need to evolve a general alternative to the Tories. It was a cynical move with an eye to the coming general election. Since the Labour Party maintains its long-standing outlook on 'criminalisation' and still identifies the 'terrorists' as the problem, it will at best replace the PTA with an Act which is just as repressive but slightly less indiscriminate.

2 Irish prisoners

Irish political prisoners in Britain suffer the full force of 'criminalisation'. Although they are labelled as ordinary criminals, the treatment meted out to them sets them apart from other prisoners. From their arrest to their release, Irish political prisoners are given an unofficial special category status. They receive all the penalties of political status, but none of the benefits.

The majority of the Irish political prisoners are convicted members of the republican movement. But there are also those (13 in 1983) who have nothing to do with the nationalist struggle. These people are victims of frame-ups. But to protest their 'innocence' is to accept the 'guilt' of the republicans, and to misunderstand 'criminalisation'. In the eyes of the state, to be Irish in Britain is guilt enough. All Irish people are liable to harassment under the PTA and, when circumstances demand it, all Irish people are in danger of

imprisonment. Opposition to the treatment of Irish political prisoners can only be effective if based on defending the rights of *all* the prisoners.

Republican prisoners are victims of the trial procedures of kangaroo courts. More than 80 per cent are tried for conspiracy – a charge so open to definition that little or no evidence is required. The onus is always on the defendant to prove innocence. It is common for groups of Irish nationalists to be tried together, even when they have never met and their cases are unconnected. This has the advantage of creating an air of guilt by association and a climate of anti-Irish hysteria which helps to guarantee conviction.

The 'evidence' is often farcical. The most infamous frame-up was that of Annie Maguire in 1976. At the trial of four people accused of the Guildford and Woolwich pub-bombings, a bomb factory run by an anonymous 'Aunt Annie' was mentioned. The press seized on this, demanding that 'Aunt Annie' be caught. Annie Maguire, who had lived in England for 20 years and was a member of Paddington Conservative club, was picked out as the target for the witchhunt. She was from Belfast and had friends from Belfast visiting her; that alone made her guilty. Her house was raided, and she and seven friends and relatives were arrested. They were all found guilty of running a bomb factory and received sentences ranging from four to fourteen years.

The only piece of evidence offered at the Maguire trial was a rubber glove. Forensic tests had shown this glove to have traces of explosives on it. This was presented as unquestionable proof of guilt, and eight Irish people went to jail. Evidence produced later showed that the forensic tests had been improperly conducted and that the 'explosive' traces found could just as easily have been left by cigarette smoke.

Turning the screws

According to prison regulations all prisoners are categorised A-D, according to security risk. An additional category 'E' is used for prisoners who are thought keen to escape. Extra security arrangements are made for these prisoners. There are about 400 'A' prisoners out of a prison population in England and Wales of 44 000 (*Irish Post*, 27 March 1982). All but a handful of Irish political prisoners are category 'A'; many are 'AE'.

The application of category 'A' status to republicans is the British state's way of singling out these prisoners for special treatment, whilst maintaining the lie that there are no political prisoners in England. In fact, all Irish political prisoners are treated as special cases. Category 'A' republicans are singled out for especially strict treatment. There exists a 'Special A' or 'Irish A' category (*POW: bulletin of the Irish political prisoners in Britain*, August 1982). This status is designed to impose maximum isolation on Irish prisoners: they are not allowed to mix freely with other prisoners.

GOD works in mysterious ways. All prisoners are liable to have an experience with GOD, but Irish prisoners are particularly favoured. GOD (Rule 43 – Good Order and Discipline) is a temporary order by which a prisoner can

be placed in solitary confinement for up to 28 days. Although 'temporary', it is renewable indefinitely and some republican prisoners have spent years in solitary confinement. Brendan Dowd has spent two and a half years solid in solitary. Paul Hill has spent a total of 800 days in isolation. The 'lie-down' rule under GOD entails a 23-hour lock-up with only a bucket in the room during the day and bedding thrown in at night (*An Phoblacht/Republican News*, 29 July 1982). Appeals against GOD can only be made to the Home Office, which normally takes a leisurely six months to consider the case.

Visiting restrictions are tight for 'A' prisoners and tighter still for those designated 'AE'. Irish political prisoners are likely to have additional restrictions on their visits. In 1977, there were 92 prisoners in England whose visits come under 'especially secure' restrictions. All but 10 of these were Irish republicans. Visiting restrictions and security procedures are designed to break Irish prisoners from regular contact with friends and family.

All visitors to 'A' prisoners require police approval. The police require a photo and a written explanation of the visitor's relationship to the prisoner, which must predate the prisoner's conviction. Those who apply are liable to be visited by the police – possibly at work – to have the application discussed. In practice the regulations restrict visits to a prisoner's immediate family.

Visits are conducted under 'especially secure' conditions. Conversation takes place through glass or a wire mesh. Everything is recorded by closed-circuit television cameras. Warders are present to prevent physical contact and to make notes of the conversation. Prisoners are strip-searched before and after the visit. Visitors are also searched. The distress and aggravation that visits entail has meant that many potential contacts are denied to Irish political prisoners.

However, the degrading conditions of visits are not the main barrier facing any republican prisoner who wants to maintain contacts with family and friends. Although it is official Home Office policy to locate all prisoners as near to their families as possible this policy does not apply to Irish political prisoners. The immediate families of most Irish prisoners live in Ireland, and the distance is too great for many people to be able to make a visit very often.

Even when a visit is arranged, the prison authorities often interfere with it. Republicans are transferred around different prisons more frequently than most prisoners. This is to exacerbate their isolation and disorientation. These transfers are often timed to coincide with arranged visits. Relatives sometimes arrive at a prison to find that their son or brother has been moved to the other end of the country a few hours before. Stephen Blake from Donegal, most recently held in Albany prison, has had no visit for three and a half years because of frequent transfers (*An Phoblacht/Republican News*, 11 March 1982).

Prisoners who are causing trouble are moved as a form of punishment. Eddie Byrne whose family lives in Birmingham, was moved from Gartree prison to the Isle of Wight more than 100 miles away, as a result of his campaign

against the use of drugs to control the prison population in Gartree (*Irish Post*, 18 September 1982).

Prison authorities like to play sick jokes with prisoners' transfer requests. Pat Guilfoyle had constantly asked to be moved from Wormwood Scrubs to a prison in the Midlands in order to be closer to his elderly parents in Birmingham. Early in 1982, shortly after both his parents died, the prison authorities announced that they would grant his long-standing request, and they moved him to Gartree. Guilfoyle, like most Irish political prisoners, was denied compassionate parole to attend his parents' funeral (*An Phoblacht/Republican News*, 29 April 1982).

Apart from the distress caused by visiting conditions and cancelled visits, the families and friends of Irish prisoners are subjected to harassment from the state. The most famous example is that of Guiseppe Conlon, who was arrested under the PTA when he came from Ireland to visit his son. He was sentenced to 12 years, and subsequently died in a prison hospital on 22 January 1980. Relatives of Stephen Nordone and Stephen Blake have ceased to visit. During their last trip to Britain in June 1977 they were arrested under the PTA.

Screw brutality

Irish political prisoners suffer ill treatment in different ways. There are many accounts of beatings after protests against ill treatment or in solidarity with the Irish struggle. The prisoners' rights group – PROP – has exposed the existence of a special squad to deal with problems of prison order: republican prisoners have suffered particularly at its hands. It is known as the MUFTI (Minimum Use of Force Tactical Intervention) squad. Details of injuries sustained by one prisoner are detailed in a letter from Eddie Byrne (see opposite). The press and prison governors give the impression that injuries sustained by Irish political prisoners are inflicted by other prisoners. Republican POWs deny this: last year one wrote a public statement which emphasised the solidarity that exists between ordinary prisoners and Irish political prisoners.

Drugs are used against Irish prisoners and other 'politically conscious' and 'non-conforming' prisoners to control them. Parkhurst, Gartree and Hull are particularly known for the use of drugs. The screws forcibly administered addictive barbiturates to Eddie Byrne at Gartree. Byrne's allegations have been taken up by the Liberal peer Lord Avebury (*Irish Post*, 18 September 1982).

Prison brutality does not end with bruised minds and bodies. Five Irish political prisoners have been killed in prison. On 3 June 1974, Michael Gaughan died after being force-fed in Parkhurst at the end of a long hunger-strike. He contracted pneumonia after a force-feeding tube penetrated his lung. On 12 February, 1976 Frank Stagg died on hunger-strike in Wakefield after a three-year struggle against 'criminalisation' in solitary confinement. And on 9 October 1976, Noel Jenkinson died in mysterious circumstances in the special security block at Leicester prison. He had spent six months in

Letter from Irish POW



I am one of a number of Irish prisoners currently serving sentences in connection with our country's political upheaval.

In the course of my sentence I have spent 3½ years in solitary confinement, and am at present entering my fourth month of one of my periods in solitary. I have been transferred around 16 different establishments with stopover periods averaging four months, affording me no opportunity to form any kind of stable existence within these prison walls.

In English jails I am continuously subjected to discrimination, victimisation and brutality, perpetrated by staff and administration. Contrary to the misconception propagated by the autho-

rities, the ordinary criminal population holds no malevolence towards us.

Assaults against me and injuries sustained have been exclusively at the hands of prison personnel. Assaults and maltreatment have been an integral part of my rehabilitation, and consequently I have spent periods of up to seven days in hospital, recovering from my injuries.

On one occasion I was not afforded the luxury of a hospital bed and had to recover from my injuries lying naked on a cell floor; it was a winter's night, the cell was unheated and the glass had been removed from the windows.

When I had regained consciousness I crawled onto a piece of foam, and attempted to wrap it around myself in an effort to keep warm. The following day, when I was capable of examining my injuries, they were as follows: bruising and swelling of the eyes, causing right eye to close and left to partially close; lacerations and swelling of left forehead; bruising to back of head causing extensive swelling; swelling to left side of jaw extending behind left ear; severe and extensive bruising of back and shoulders; bruising of lower-rib cage and kidney area; bruising and abrasions of the thigh and lower legs; acute pain across shoulders and extending down left arm.

My treatment has been a violation of the European Convention on Human Rights, the United Nations Charter on the minimum standards of treatment for prisoners, and all other human rights conventions ever convened.

The British media are particularly vociferous in their condemnation of human rights violations in the Eastern Bloc or Latin America, and rightly so. Yet there is a disturbing silence, emanating from all quarters, concerning the treatment of Irish subjects within England's Victorian dustbins.

Eddie Byrne,
HM Prison Gartree,
Leics. England.

(*POW Bulletin* May 1982)



Republican prisoners protesting on the roof of Wormwood Scrubs prison

solitary and had been badly beaten on three occasions. Guiseppe Conlon's death has already been described. The fifth was Sean O'Connell who died of cancer at Parkhurst in October 1977 after being treated with aspirin and alcohol rubs. His condition, which had been ignored by the prison authorities, was only diagnosed by an independent autopsy.

The main demand of Irish political prisoners is for repatriation to Ireland on demand. According to the 1964 'Instrument No 388 Prison Rule 31', all prisoners should be located as near to their families as possible.

More than 60 British soldiers have been transferred from the Six Counties to English jails after 'crimes committed in the course of duty'. But only four Irish prisoners (Marian Price, Dolours Price, Hugh Feeney, Gerard Kelly) have been transferred to Ireland — and then only when they were on the verge of death after a 205 day hunger-strike in 1974.

In one of the clearest expressions of the government's recognition of the republican prisoners' membership of a *political* organisation, and their *political* motivation, Tory junior Northern Ireland Minister Lord Gowrie recently rejected any comparison between soldiers of HM Armed Forces and soldiers of the IRA:

'As regards the transfer of soldiers who have been sentenced to imprisonment for offences committed in Northern Ireland the minister can only repeat his view that persons sent to the province in the course of their duty cannot be compared with persons who have set out to commit offences on behalf of organisations whose public and declared aim is to challenge, by means of terrorism, including pre-planned murder, the authority of the elected government.' (*Irish Post*, 14 August 1982)

Demands for repatriation have been taken up by humanitarian organisations and individuals, who centre their campaigns on the suffering and harassment prisoners' relatives go through when visiting. Several Liberal and Labour MPs have supported such campaigns by writing to the Home Secretary. William Whitelaw has dismissed their protests by admitting that he is breaking statutory obligation, but protesting that such methods are necessary to prevent 'terrorists' receiving 'heroes' welcomes in Ireland (*POW*, May 1982). No liberal or reformist can counter such statements without opposing the strategy of 'criminalisation' and admitting the reality of the Irish War. The prisoners themselves are clear about the issues at stake in demanding repatriation. They want political status, not humanitarian concessions:

'Whether we spend 20 years in prison in England or 20 years in prison in Ireland is irrelevant to us; what is relevant to us is that we never plead or apologise to people who for years have done their utmost to break us and criminalise our nation and our national aspirations.' (*POW*, May 1982)

Prisoners are especially keen to distance themselves from representations made on their behalf by pro-imperialists such as John Hume of the SDLP or Father Faul of the Catholic church.

Despite all the obstacles, the Irish political prisoners have a remarkable record of resistance to all attempts to criminalise them. Roof-top protests have been one effective way of drawing public attention to their cause. On 26

April, 1981 at Wormwood Scrubs, and from 4-11 May at Long Lartin, republican prisoners demonstrated on the roofs with flags and painted slogans. They shouted messages of support to their comrades on hunger-strike in the H-Blocks. Hunger-strikes have been used to protest against ill-treatment and 'criminalisation'. Several prisoners have organised blanket protests. Despite many risks Irish political prisoners have organised themselves under their own discipline. Their solidarity was clearly displayed in February 1983 when republican prisoners organised a solid one-day national strike from all prison work to publicise their demand for repatriation. Little of this ever gets reported because, of course, 'there are no political prisoners in English jails'.

6. Britain – tasks for anti-imperialists

For 14 years the British establishment has succeeded in manipulating anti-Irish sentiment with the object of forcing all sections of society to close ranks behind government policy in Ireland. This success is especially apparent at moments when the liberation struggle causes a particular embarrassment or danger to Britain – for example, during the H-Block hunger-strikes or every time the IRA launches a bombing campaign in London. And Britain's propaganda success is striking in that it has taken in not only middle class Tories and Liberals, but the great bulk of the labour movement.

The hostility of the British ruling class to the Irish freedom struggle is only to be expected. But why have other sections of society lined up so firmly against the Irish cause, or at best, remained indifferent? The reason is because the Irish liberation struggle is a direct challenge to the British state. Those who are concerned to preserve the existing institutions of society and to maintain social stability correctly see in the struggle for Irish freedom a direct threat to their interests.

The TUC and Labour Party have a long record of collaboration with imperialism. The labour bureaucrats have opposed Irish independence since the turn of the century and they have consistently blocked British workers' attempts to assist the anti-imperialist struggle. In 1913 British trade unionists took direct action in solidarity with Irish workers locked-out in Dublin. The trade union leaders worked behind the scenes to curb the workers' militancy. An official from the dockers' union later recalled how difficult it was to contain the spirit of solidarity:

'In all my experience I have never known a time when there has been manifested a desire to help any union in dispute as there is among dockers in London and the provincial ports towards their Dublin comrades...It has been with the greatest trouble... that we have so far been able to hold the men in check.' (Cited in B Holton, *British Syndicalism 1900-1914*)

During the war of independence from 1918 to 1921 tens of thousands of

workers demonstrated their solidarity with the republican movement in Ireland. But on every occasion the protests were contained by the labour bureaucrats, who upheld Partition as a just and democratic solution.

During the present war the trade union leaders have ruthlessly policed the working class. When a group of post office workers in London voted in 1970 to cut off postal and telephone services to troops in the Six Counties, the leaders of their union swiftly moved in to crush this act of defiance (*The Times*, 8 July 1970). In 1981, the TUC launched a witchhunt against trade union bodies that supported a conference calling for solidarity with the Irish liberation struggle (See *TUC hands off Ireland!*, RCP pamphlet). However, the TUC could not carry out its policing role unless its outlook had a degree of resonance among the membership of the trade unions.

British labour and British imperialism

The TUC and the Labour Party play a crucial role in maintaining the popular consensus behind Britain's war in Ireland. Their ability to play this role rests on the alternative Irish policies they have developed. Whenever there is the slightest sign of workers moving towards an anti-imperialist stand on the Irish War, the labour bureaucracy proposes a set of reforms for the Six Counties. These proposals, for example, the 1971 Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland or the 1976 Better Life for All Campaign attempt to reconcile workers' demands for justice in Ireland with the continuation of British domination.

These reformist policies appeal to people who would like to see a progressive solution to the Irish War. However, the same policies also reinforce the allegiance between workers and their own state – for it is British imperialism that is seen as the agency of progressive change in Ireland. The object is to reform British domination, not abolish it.

By definition, any British policy for Ireland means the denial of the right of the Irish people to decide their own future, the right of *self-determination*. Worse still, it actually implies that British imperialism can play a progressive role in Ireland. Once Britain is identified as a potentially progressive force, it is only a short step to seeing Britain's opponents as the main problem. Thus Labour's policy for Ireland is always posed as an alternative to the liberation movement. As TUC chief Len Murray told Irish trade unionists, the aim was to 'assist trade unionists in securing social change by peaceful means, thus providing an alternative to the bullet and the bomb' (*Press release*, 27 January 1981). Even though the TUC's campaigns are moribund, its outlook influences many workers who want to see change in Ireland; it draws them over to the side of imperialism against the national liberation movement.

Many people who are unfamiliar with the situation in the Six Counties see reform as a plausible option. The fact that the Six Counties are irreformable and that there is no alternative to military rule is not immediately apparent on this side of the Irish Sea. The labour bureaucracy takes advantage of many workers' desires for peace in Ireland and the widespread confusion about the nature of the Irish War to mobilise support for a reformed imperialist policy and hostility towards the struggle for liberation. This is how the

President of the TUC summed up its position in his comments on the *Better Life for All Campaign* at the 1976 Congress:

'I am sure that the voices and ideas that have been expressed from this rostrum will be heard in Northern Ireland and the people on the streets in Northern Ireland will conquer the maniacs and the gunmen who have been shooting down so many trade unionists.' (*TUC Report*, 1976)

The message was clear – 'if you want a change for the better, smash the IRA'.

Apostles of peace

The view that the Six Counties should be reformed runs in parallel with the notion that the violence of the oppressed is the fundamental problem in the Irish War. This is an outlook that has been popularised by the Labour Party. Its author is none other than former Northern Ireland Minister Merlyn Rees, best known for his advocacy of 'Ulsterisation'. In a speech to Parliament, in which he outlined the policy of 'Ulsterisation', Rees also argued for the removal of the proscription of Provisional Sinn Fein:

'But in my view there are signs that on both extreme wings there are people who, although at one time committed to violence, would now like to find a way back to political activity. It is right to encourage this as much as possible. It is the counterpart of our action against those who use violence.' (*The Times*, 5 April 1974)

The aim behind legalising Sinn Fein was to encourage it towards 'normal' political activity and to press the republican movement towards relinquishing the armed struggle.

This theme has since been repeated *ad nauseum* and it still motivates many of the pronouncements of the Labour left. Many will recall the furore caused by the invitation from the leader of the Greater London Council for a Sinn Fein delegation to come to London in December 1982. Ken Livingstone was simply pursuing the policy set out by Rees. In response to a bomb that went off in the Six Counties killing a dozen soldiers just before the delegation was due to arrive in London, Livingstone issued a statement to the press:

'We are horrified at last night's violence which adds even more unnecessary deaths to the two and a half thousand killed since the troubles began. We will make it clear at our meeting with Sinn Fein next Tuesday – as Michael Foot asked us – that the Labour Party is utterly opposed to violence. These further killings confirm our view of the desperate need for a political solution which can end the violence of the last 13 years.' (Cited in *the next step* January 1983)

Merlyn Rees could not have put it better. But his views have much more force when they come out of the mouth of a left-winger like Livingstone. Livingstone is critical of many aspects of British rule in Ireland and his statements are seen as an alternative to Britain's Irish policy. But his alternative rests on the stern injunction: 'put down your guns and we'll talk!' Livingstone's 'political solution' is no different from the solutions sought by every Northern Ireland Minister since the war began. From Whitelaw, to Rees, to Mason, through to Prior, the objective has always been the same – to eliminate the military threat posed by the liberation movement.

To its discredit the British left has gone along with the Rees-Livingstone approach. The left alternative means substituting a spurious political solution for the armed struggle. It is the policy of 'normalisation' but in a radical guise; a British solution which seeks to pacify the liberation movement by drawing it into the 'normal' processes of British politics. Thus an unholy alliance has been created — from the right to the far left — which aims to 'solve' the Irish War through a British solution. The only debate among these strange bed-fellows concerns the precise form of the final solution the British should impose on the Irish people.

Off the fence!

The confusion created by the Right-Left bloc has disorientated many genuine opponents of British imperialism. It has strengthened tendencies towards a form of solidarity work in Britain which avoids taking a stand on the Irish War. Many British socialists believe that campaigns around issues such as torture, repression or plastic bullets can shock the mass of British people into opposing their government. Thus the campaigns are often presented as neutral, impartial and objective. In 1978, the 'International Tribunal on British Crimes in Ireland' changed its name to 'International Tribunal on Britain's presence in Ireland' lest people thought it was prejudicing the issue. In February 1983 a Labour Party conference on plastic bullets mobilised support around the open-ended question 'are plastic bullets part of the solution or part of the problem?'

Appeals to British justice and fair play have proved singularly ineffective in mobilising popular opposition to the Irish War. Not only is this approach dishonest, it also doesn't work. The British public is not like an umpire at a cricket match. People support 'our' government and 'our' soldiers in Ireland. Many people may have misgivings about many aspects of the Irish War but in the end they recognise that the only alternatives are victory or defeat. People who support British policy will accept repression and torture, perhaps as unfortunate and unpleasant, but certainly as necessary and unavoidable. Hence while the ineffectual 'Tribunal on Britain's Presence in Ireland' was asking Roy Mason to make a submission, Labour's Northern Ireland Minister was telling the gutter press how Britain's latest solution was proceeding:

'We are squeezing the terrorists like rolling up a toothpaste tube. We are squeezing them out of their safe havens. We are squeezing them away from their supplies of money and explosives. We are squeezing them out of society and into prison.' (*Daily Express*, 5 December 1977)

The directness of 'Butcher' Mason stands in sharp contrast to the evasions of the British left. The ruling class asks the British public straight — support our war drive; the left demands objectivity and neutrality.

Like any war, the conflict in Ireland has two protagonists. One side stands for oppression in Ireland and reaction in Britain; the other side represents Irish freedom and a challenge to the grip of the ruling class in Britain. The battle lines are drawn on the streets of Belfast and Derry. They cannot be re-

drawn in a debate about British fair play in Labour's committee rooms. The failure of the British solidarity movement is the failure to choose sides in the Irish War. As its search for a middle ground, made up of people who would oppose the extremes of British brutality without supporting the national liberation struggle, has proved futile, the solidarity movement has found itself talking to a shrinking circle of its own committed supporters. No British worker has ever joined the cause of Irish freedom out of a sense of revulsion against plastic bullets. Every time a discussion begins on plastic bullets or on repression in Ireland the ruling class has simply to shout 'IRA' and everyone runs for cover. No sooner did the Labour-controlled GLC announce in February that it was considering giving a grant for an 'objective' study of the PTA, than it withdrew under a storm of denunciations of IRA bombers.

The response of the Troops Out Movement, the group that applied for the grant, was instructive. In its press release it emphasised the painful dilemma of sitting on the fence:

'The hysteria generated bears no relation to the actual application for a grant towards monitoring the PTA. It would appear... that there are only two positions possible: total support for the British Government or total support for the IRA, with no room for any middle of the road outside.' (*The Irish Times*, 23 February 1983)

The fact that TOM has been forced to recognise the stark alternatives does not mean that it intends to choose one of them and give up its quest for the 'middle of the road'. It refers only ironically to the way the British ruling class sees the war as a question of choosing sides — and carries on its long tradition of avoiding that choice. Just as the GLC crumbled, so does the Irish solidarity movement in Britain every time the ruling class goes on the offensive. It will continue to do so until it gets off the fence and starts arguing for Ireland's victory and Britain's defeat.

For Irish Freedom

What can be done in Britain? A lot. What is required is a fundamental re-orientation in Irish solidarity work. The point of departure for the solidarity movement must be its support for the struggle for Irish liberation. Nobody will do anything to oppose Britain's war policies unless they identify with the cause of Irish freedom. Anti-imperialists must give a lead, explain what Irish people are fighting for, and why British imperialism is as much the enemy of a worker from Newcastle as of the people of Derry.

The British ruling class has successfully pursued a policy which is directly opposed to ours. They have carefully constructed a consensus built on the proposition that the republican in Derry is the enemy of the worker in Newcastle. This consensus of support for British imperialism was not built up overnight. True, the Tories and the more backward sections of society were prepared to support British coercion in Ireland right from the start. Others were won over gradually by a mixture of guile and appeals to patriotism. The labour bureaucracy dealt with the rest — combining a hypocritical criticism of the violence with a more enlightened British solution.

The emergence and consolidation of this bloc was not inevitable from the start. What made it inevitable was the refusal of thousands of British socialists to make the Irish War an issue in the working class. Some did not even make the attempt. Others avoided a head-on confrontation with the emerging anti-Irish consensus and took their stand on secondary questions of civil rights, repression and perversions of justice. This approach gave the ruling class a walk-over. Even if workers had wanted to take the side of the Irish people in the early years of the war there was no place for them to go.

Just as the consensus behind British imperialism was built up gradually, so too the anti-imperialist movement has to be built in stages. The first stage is to unite those who already support the struggle of the Irish people. Until recently supporters of Irish freedom have been discouraged from coming out and making their anti-imperialist views public knowledge. The old solidarity movement argued that such views only alienate public opinion and make it impossible for new forces to join the ranks. Instead of encouraging people to speak out against British imperialism, anti-imperialists have spent much of the last decade pretending to be liberals and trying to persuade workers to respond to soft liberal criticisms of British terror in Ireland.

This first stage is important because unless somebody makes a start there will be no example of what anti-imperialism means in practice. But even at this early stage anti-imperialists must fight for the support of the working class. British workers – whether employed or unemployed – have a direct interest in the victory of the Irish people. At present this is far from clear to most British workers. Anti-imperialism means making this interest tangible to workers in their tens of thousands. All our arguments and all our activities must be directed towards the exposure of the imperialist war so that the common bond that unites the future of British workers and the Irish people is revealed.

When British workers think about Ireland they don't think about plastic bullets, prison conditions or Army brutality. They think about the IRA, bombing campaigns and the bloodbath. Anti-imperialists must have answers to the questions that arise on these issues. Rather than being defensive, anti-imperialists must go on the offensive. Today millions of people are talking about war and peace. Tens of thousands are prepared to protest about the threat of a nuclear war in the future. We must make an issue of the war that is going on now, a war that has been going on for more than 13 years. If the issues are not dodged there are great opportunities for initiating debate and discussion and influencing an audience of thousands.

The fight for Irish freedom in Britain cannot be conducted in separation from the other struggles of the working class. It is too important a question for the working class. More than a hundred years ago Marx made the point that the British working class would 'never do anything' unless it made common cause with the Irish people. Marx knew that if workers tolerated imperialist oppression and lined up with their own bosses over Ireland they would not have the *political independence* to fight for their own interests. The future of the British working class is inextricably linked with the out-

come of the fight for Irish freedom.

The meaning of solidarity

Anti-imperialism means choosing the side of the oppressed against their oppressor. It means not only opposing particular aspects of British policy, but rejecting the very presence of imperialism in Ireland. It is not the job of British anti-imperialists to offer an alternative policy for Ireland. The starting point of anti-imperialists is the principle of self-determination for Ireland. From this principle it follows that the focus of our activity must be for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland. As long as British troops remain in any part of Ireland it will be impossible for the Irish people to determine their own future.

Many British politicians pay lip service to the demand of self-determination for Ireland. But for them self-determination means elections, or plans implemented under the authority of the British state. On the other hand, the principle of self-determination is used as a justification for the domination of the Loyalist majority in the Six Counties. These British definitions of self-determination evade the issue of immediate troop withdrawal. A left-wing variant of this approach is to declare support for self-determination, while placing conditions on how the struggle for self-determination should be conducted. Thus the British left denounces the military tactics of the liberation movement – especially its bombing campaigns – and gives advice on what tactics should be pursued.

The right to self-determination means the right to fight for self-determination. It is up to the Irish liberation movement to decide on the methods it employs to realise its objectives. British anti-imperialists must support the struggle for Irish freedom in all its forms. To do otherwise would be to lay down conditions on how the struggle should be conducted. In practice this means the denial of the right of the Irish to fight imperialist oppression.

The role of British anti-imperialists is to fight British imperialism, not to give advice to the republican movement. Our job is to build an effective movement through exposing the propaganda war of the ruling class. This means fighting the 'criminalisation' of the Irish people. Anti-imperialists must actively oppose the PTA and fight for the rights of Irish political prisoners in Britain. The British propaganda war has to be countered by a sustained programme of action which can show tens of thousands that the real criminals are the politicians and the British state.

Every manifestation of British oppression – from torture to plastic bullets – should be used to expose imperialist domination. But all the time anti-imperialists must ensure that their arguments and their activities force more and more workers to take the side of the oppressed in the Irish War. Only if the case for Irish freedom is presented in a direct and compelling way will the present consensus around imperialist policies be broken. Then the struggle of the Irish people will become a source of inspiration for the British working class.

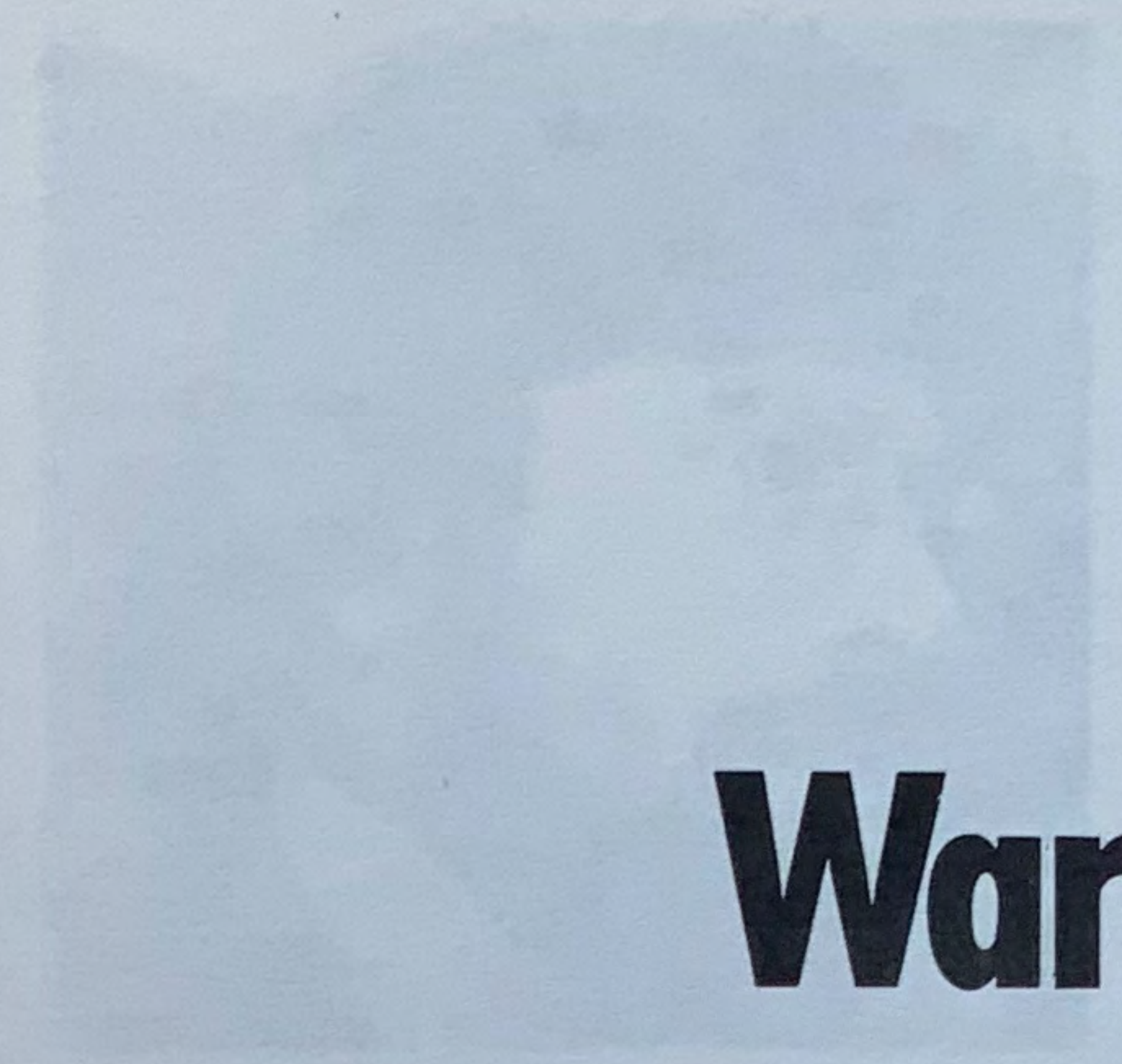
The meaning of anti-imperialism is not a simple one. It means the struggle against the domination of one nation over another, against the exploitation of the poor by the rich, against the oppression of the weak by the strong. It is a struggle for the liberation of the oppressed peoples of the world, for the establishment of a new world order based on justice and equality.

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The personalities of the Irish War



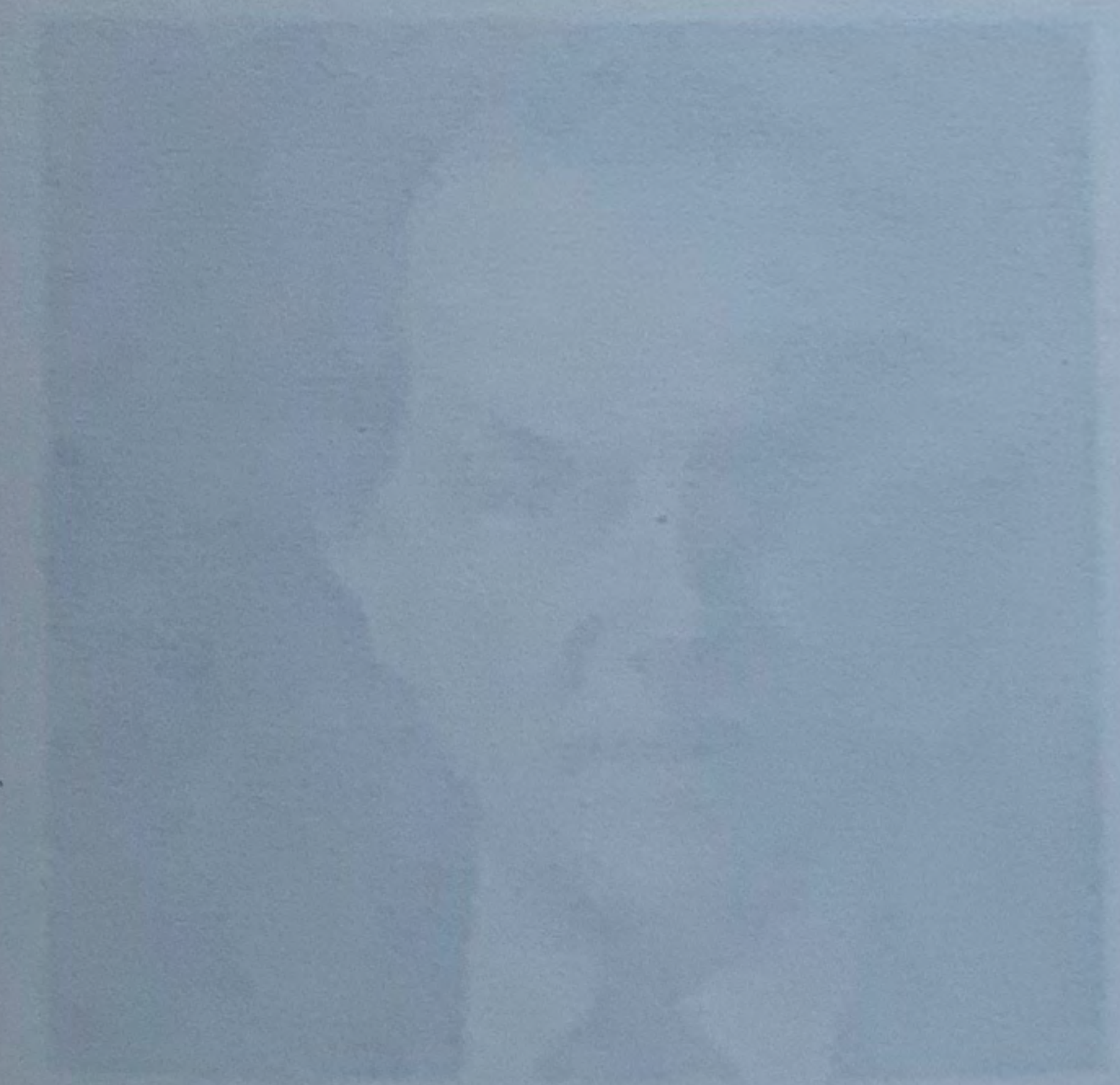
ADAMS
Gerry

The Provisional IRA was formed in 1972, following the collapse of the IRA's political wing, the IRA's Political Wing. It was formed by a group of IRA members who were opposed to the IRA's political wing and who wanted to continue the struggle for Irish independence by force of arms.

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War facts



ADAMS
Eoin MacNeill

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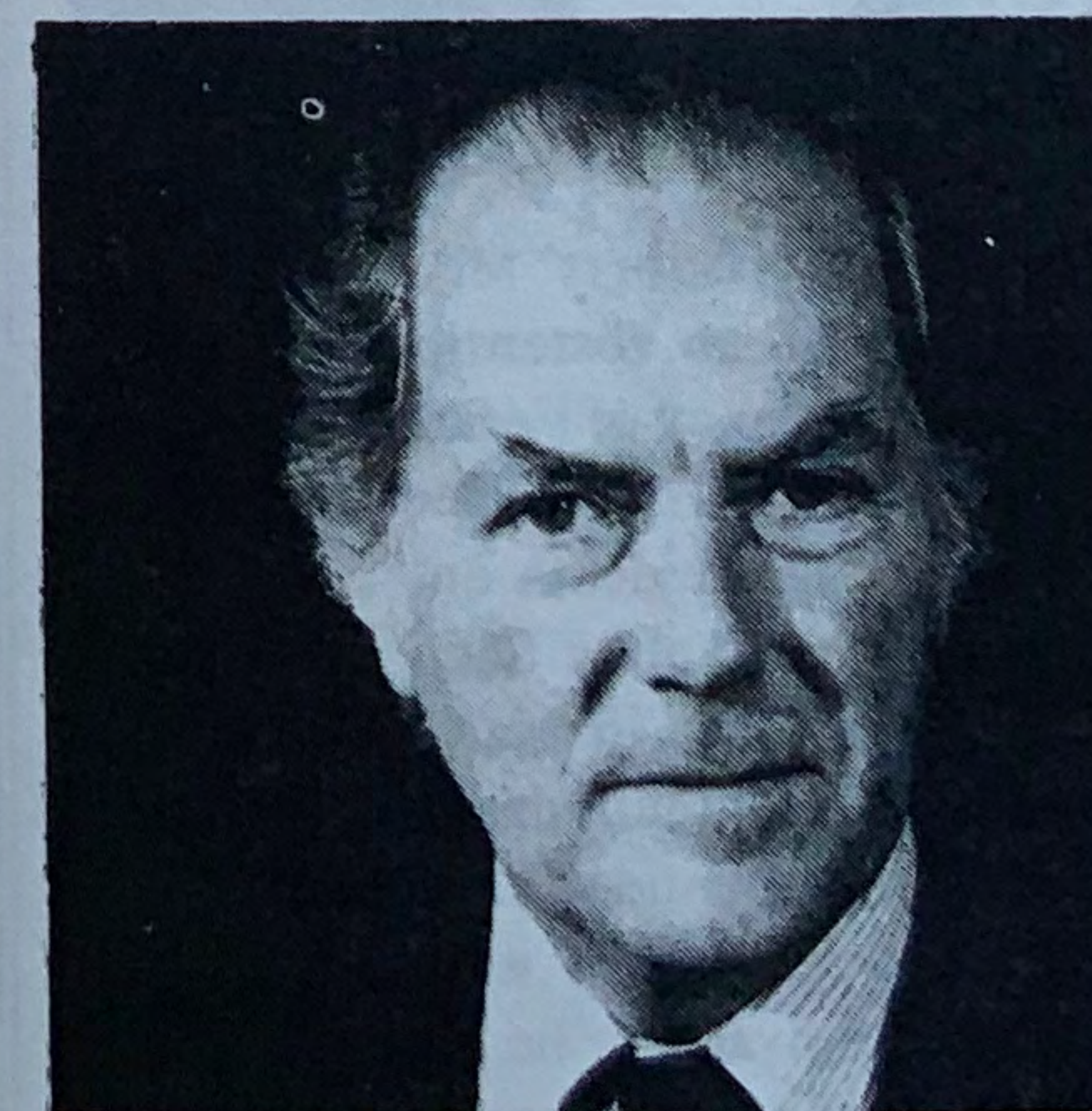
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1. The personalities of the Irish War



ADAMS
Gerry

Vice President of Provisional Sinn Féin since 1978. Born 1949, West Belfast. Interned 1971. Member of Provisional IRA delegation for secret talks with William Whitelaw, 1972. Arrested 1973 and imprisoned in H-Blocks as leading figure in Belfast IRA – released 1976. Detained on remand in 1978 for seven months on charges of IRA membership – charges subsequently dropped. At 1979 commemoration of Wolfe Tone at Bodinstown emphasised the importance of combining military tactics with a political approach. Prominent Sinn Féin leader in Six Counties during H-Block hunger-strikes 1980-81. Elected as Sinn Féin representative to 'Ulster Assembly' on abstentionist ticket, October 1982. Banned under PTA by William Whitelaw from visiting London on Sinn Féin delegation, December 1982. Host to GLC leader Ken Livingstone's visit to Belfast during which Livingstone repudiated the armed struggle and proposed a negotiated solution, February 1983.



ATKINS
Humphrey

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, 1979-1981. Appointed by Margaret Thatcher after Tory election victory May 1979. Atkins came to the Six Counties because of the assassination, during the election campaign, of Airey Neave, who was widely expected to get the job. The Belfast graffiti – Humphrey who? – summed up the general response. The ineffectual Atkins stuck to the hard-line security policies of his predecessor Roy Mason and blundered along for

two years. He handed over to James Prior after presiding over the deaths of 10 hunger-strikers and the discrediting of Britain's 'criminalisation' policy.

BARR Glen

Loyalist paramilitary leader. Member of the Loyalist Association of Workers and the Ulster Defence Association, 1971. Chairman of the coordinating committee which ran the 1974 Ulster Workers Council strike. Leader of Loyalist delegations in talks with Merlyn Rees, October 1974. Collaborator with William Craig's Vanguard movement 1973-78. Prominent in the UDA's political front the New Ulster Political Research Group, 1978.

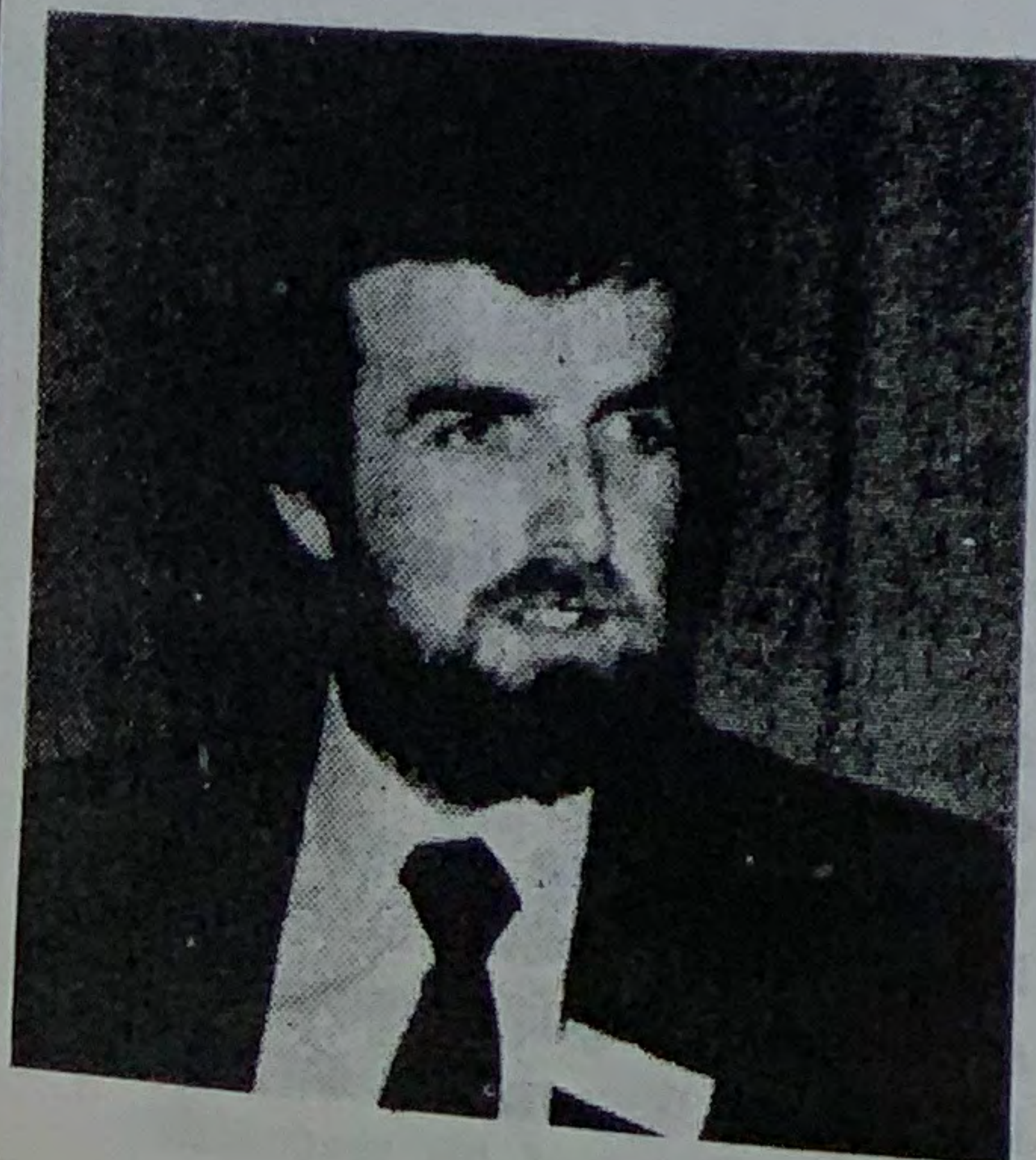


BIGGS-DAVISON John

Tory pro-Unionist Conservative front bench spokesman on Northern Ireland 1976-79; subsequently chairman of the party's Northern Ireland committee. A staunch defender of the Union and an articulate spokesman on British imperialist interests in Ireland.

CARRON Owen

Irish political prisoners' MP. Elected to Westminster on an abstentionist ticket for the constituency of Fermanagh-South Tyrone in 1981. The by-election took place following the death on hunger-strike of Bobby Sands who was elected to the seat in March 1981, following the sudden death of the sitting MP, independent nationalist Frank Maguire. Carron was formerly Sands' election agent; he campaigned on the issue of political status for Irish political prisoners. As the elected MP



for the area – and since October 1982 as Sinn Fein member of the Assembly – he has carried on this campaign for republican prisoners in Ireland and Britain.

CHICHESTER-CLARK James (now Lord Moyola)

Stormont Prime Minister, May 1969-March 1971. Ousted Terence O'Neill, in favour of a tougher approach to nationalist demands for civil rights. Requested British military invasion, August 1969. Presided over mounting chaos in 1971 as Loyalist paramilitaries regrouped and nationalist resistance became more organised. Pushed out by the even more hard-line Brian Faulkner.

CORRIGAN Mairead

Co-founder of the Peace People, 1976 with Betty Williams and Ciaran McKeown. Formed the Women's Peace Movement (later Peace People) in response to the death of her sister's three children when struck by a car whose republican driver had been shot dead at the wheel by British soldiers. The nationalist community soon repudiated the Peace People when they condemned only the resistance of the republican movement, not the violence of the British state. Further discredited by winning the Nobel peace prize and the adulation of the British establishment, the movement soon collapsed.

CONCANNON Don

Labour's Shadow Northern Ireland Minister. Junior Minister in Six Counties under Roy Mason, 1976-79. Notorious for his visit to Bobby Sands' death-bed



to inform him of the Labour Party's solid support for the Tory strategy of allowing the hunger-strikers to die. Also known for his patronage of entrepreneurs like John DeLorean, whom he provided with vast sums of public money in return for empty promises of job creation in the Six Counties.

COSTELLO **Seamus**

Founder of the Irish Republican Socialist Party. Born, Wicklow 1939, murdered by the Stalinist Official IRA (now the Workers' Party), Dublin, October 1977. As a teenager was on active service in the IRA in the 1956 campaign. Local council activist in Wicklow in the 'sixties. Prominent member of the Official IRA after 1969-70 split with Provisionals. Expelled from Official IRA because of opposition to its renunciation of the armed struggle against British imperialism. Formed IRSP in 1974.

CRAIG **William**

Loyalist leader. As Stormont Home Affairs Minister was responsible for banning civil rights march in Derry which was subsequently attacked by the RUC, October 1968. Expelled from Stormont Cabinet, December 1968. Staunch Loyalist critic of what he saw as the conciliatory approach of the Unionist leadership, calling for even harsher repression. Opposed Direct Rule, 1972, in favour of Ulster autonomy. Attracted enormous public rallies to extreme Loyalist Vanguard movement. Backer of Ulster Workers Council strike 1974. Support collapsed when he pushed his notions of an independent Ulster so far as to propose some collaboration between Loyalists and the SDLP. Appointed to Council of Europe



(and its human rights committee!) 1977. Lost East Belfast parliamentary seat to Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party, 1979.

CREASEY **Lieutenant-General** **Sir Timothy**

Army General Officer Commanding in Northern Ireland, 1977-79. Useful experience as commander of the counter-insurgency forces of the Sultan of Oman, 1972-75. Director of infantry, 1975-77. The Provisional IRA is being 'suppressed, contained and isolated' he said in December 1977. Now retired.

FAUL **Father Denis**

Catholic priest, critical of British repression and republican resistance. A long-standing campaigner on issues of civil rights and scrupulous documenter of brutality under interrogation and the use of rubber and plastic bullets. His attempts at mediation during the hunger-strikes and his condemnations of the armed struggle against British rule have brought him into repeated conflict with the republican movement.

FAULKNER **Brian** **(later Lord Downpatrick)**

Last Stormont Prime Minister, 1971-72. Succeeded O'Neill and Chichester-Clark as a more consistent hard-liner – he had resigned from O'Neill's Cabinet in January 1969 because of his concession to the nationalist community of appointing the Cameron Commission to inquire into the disturbances in Derry. His attempt to crush nationalist resistance – Internment in 1971 – backfired badly and led to the collapse of Stormont



and his premiership. Brief return to prominence as chief executive in the power-sharing assembly – before it collapsed after a few weeks in 1974. Fell off his horse while out hunting in 1976 and killed himself.

FITT Gerry

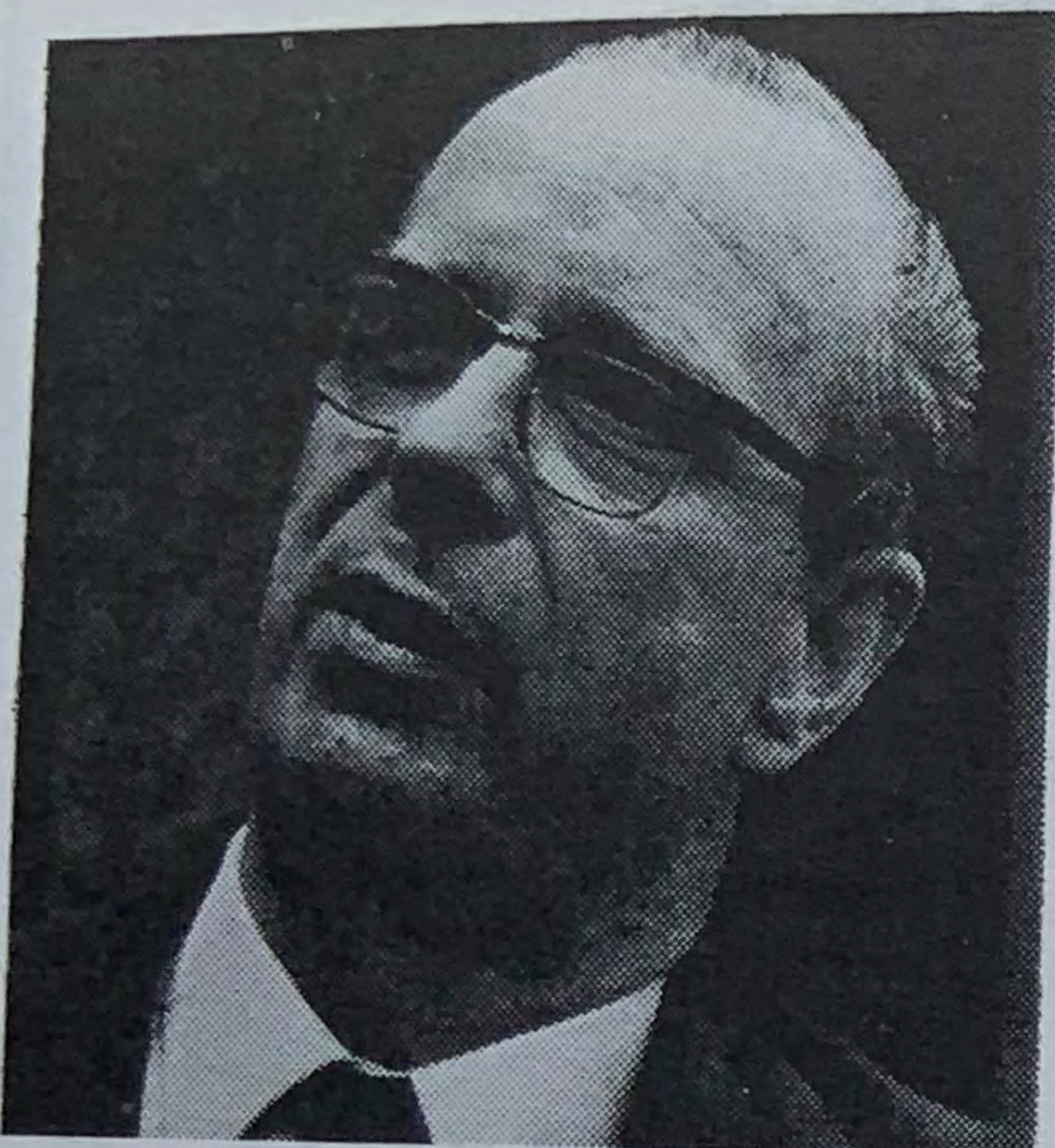
Pro-British representative of the nationalist community. Belfast city councillor, 1958; Stormont MP, 1962; Westminster MP, 1966. Early civil rights campaigner and founder-member of the SDLP, 1970. His consistent condemnation of the liberation struggle has made Fitt more and more popular with the British establishment and less and less popular in his Belfast constituency. His departure from the SDLP and his refusal to support the hunger-strikers have made his grip on West Belfast (where he had a majority of 8000 in 1979) increasingly tenuous. He may end up in the House of Lords.

GOULDING Cathal

Official IRA Chief of Staff since 1969. Born Dublin 1922, interned during the Second World War and imprisoned with Sean MacStiofain for arms raid on an Essex school in 1953. In the 'sixties prominent in promoting the Stalinist/reformist strategy that came to dominate the movement. Led the Official IRA in declaring its cease-fire in 1972 and its subsequent condemnations of the Provisionals.

HATTERSLEY Roy

The man who sent the troops in, 1969. As Labour Minister of Defence 1969-70, was directly responsible for the British



military intervention, and later for the transformation of the 'B' Specials into the UDR. As opposition defence spokesman, visited the Six Counties to review 'Operation Motorman', 1972. Supported the introduction of the PTA, 1974. As Shadow Home Secretary, opposed the renewal of the PTA in 1983, on the grounds that it was 'ineffective in dealing with terrorism'.

HERMON Jack

Chief Constable RUC 1980- . On attachment Scotland Yard, 1979.

HUME John

Leader SDLP. Member European Parliament. Born Derry 1937, teacher. Early civil rights campaigner and founder-member SDLP 1970. Eager participant in every power-sharing or devolution initiative, executive or assembly talks or even tea-party given by the British state to promote a moderate, constitutional political approach in the nationalist community. Close links with European, American and Twenty-six Counties politicians. Links with nationalist voters increasingly tenuous, as the war constantly undermines the fragile middle ground on which the SDLP has tried to build, and Sinn Fein's electoral challenge rises.

KING General Sir Frank Douglas

Army General Officer Commanding in Northern Ireland, February 1973-75. Famous for his refusal to follow government instructions to crush the Loyalist Ulster Workers Council strike that brought down the power-sharing

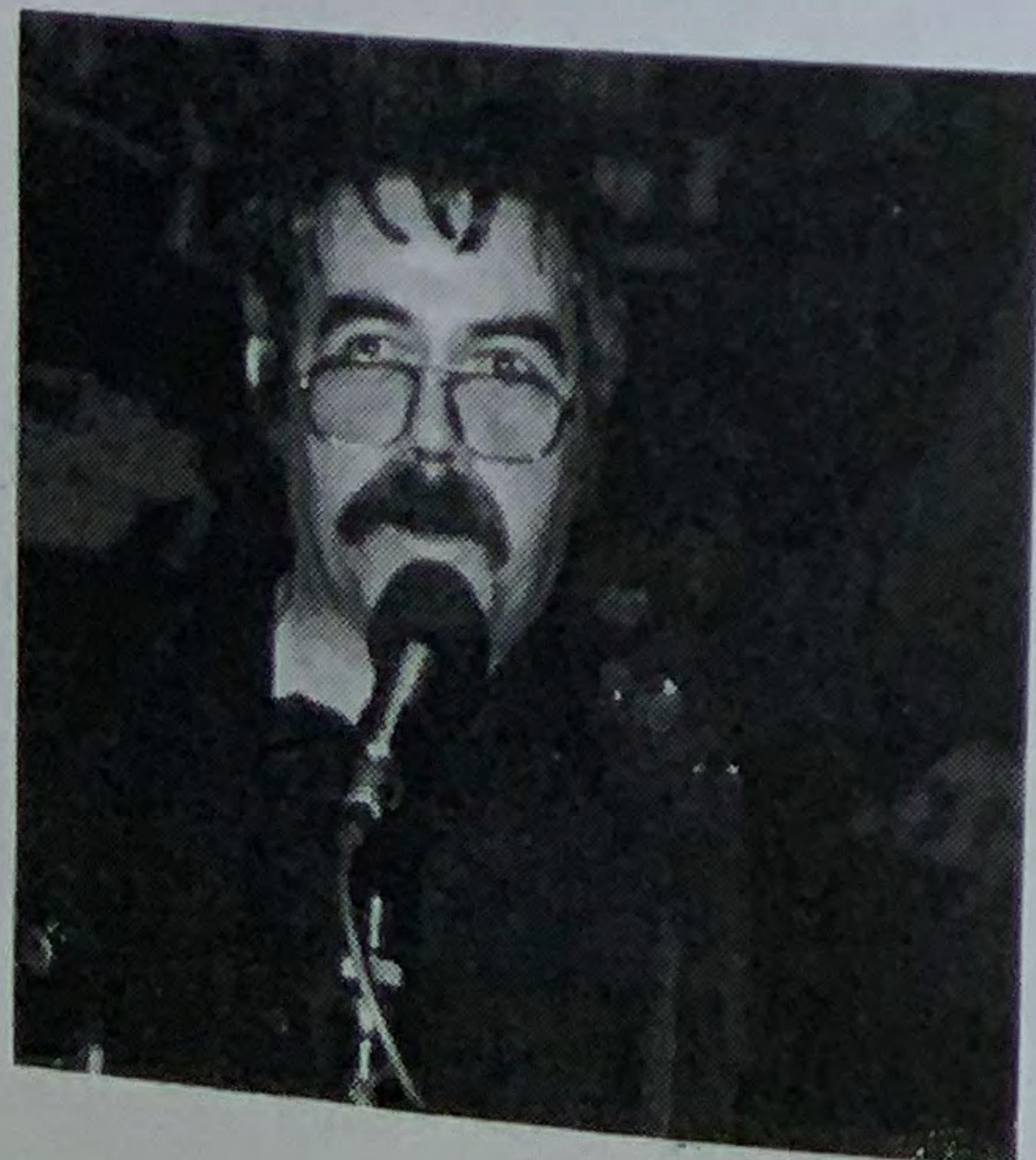




assembly in 1974. This was the clearest example since the Curragh mutiny of 1914 of the armed forces defying a political directive in the pursuit of the wider interests of the British state.

**McALISKEY (DEVLIN)
Bernadette**

Republican socialist. Born Cookstown, County Tyrone, 1947. Civil rights campaigner and founder-member Peoples Democracy, 1968. Participant in PD march Belfast to Derry, attacked by Loyalists at Burntollet, January 1969. Elected to Westminster as independent MP for Mid-Ulster, March 1969. Activist in the 'Battle of the Bogside', August 1969. Sentenced to six months imprisonment for incitement to riot and disorderly behaviour, December 1969. Punched Tory Northern Ireland Minister Reginald Maudling for lying to Parliament over Bloody Sunday, January 1972. Lost Mid-Ulster February 1974 after intervention of SDLP. Founder-member of IRSP, December 1974. Left IRSP over dispute about the relationship between military organisation and political strategy. Campaigned in support of hunger-strikers 1980-81. Seriously wounded, together with husband, in Loyalist assassination attempt, January 1981. Recovered to challenge Fianna Fail leader Charles Haughey in his Dublin constituency in both general elections in 1982.

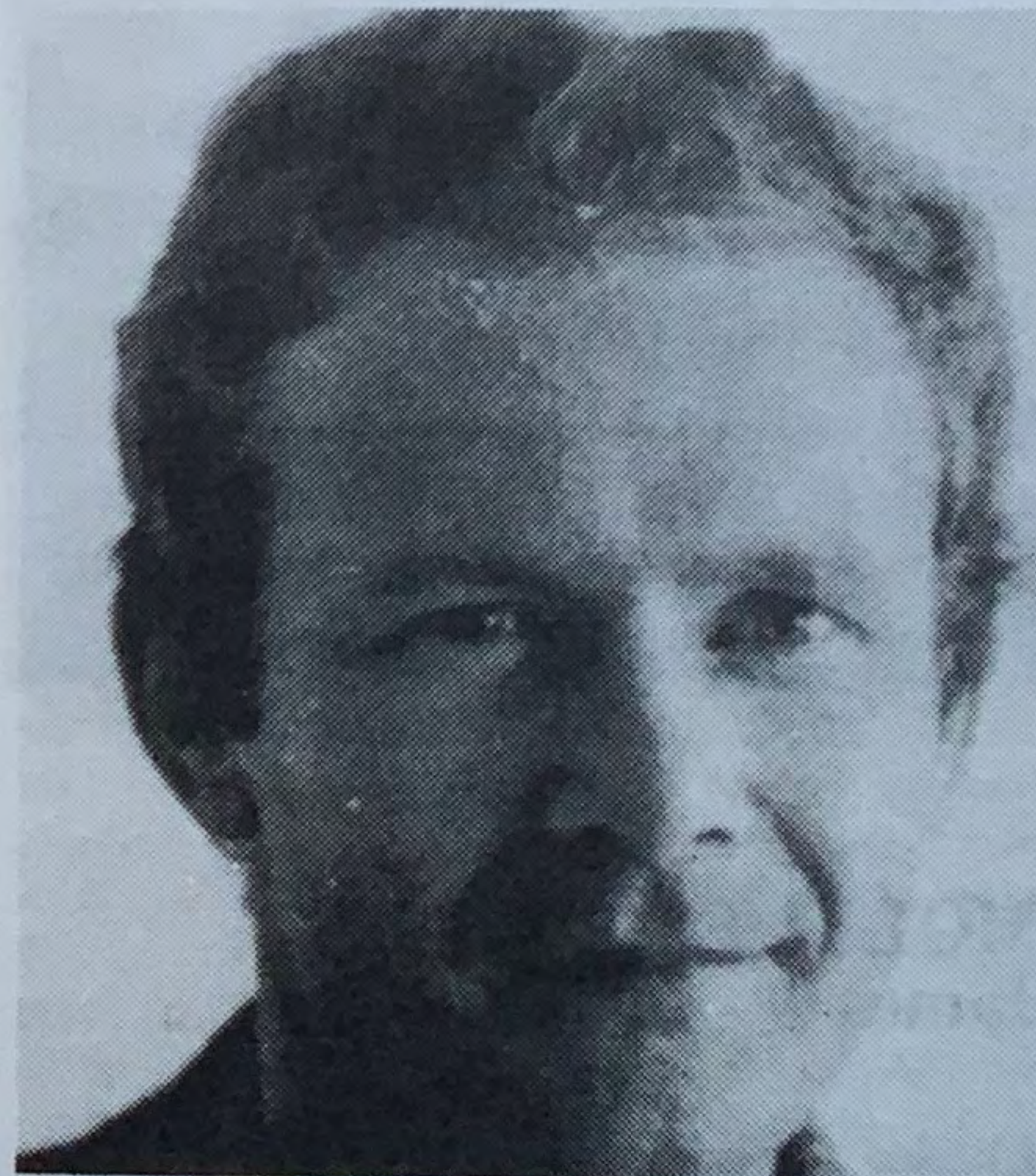


**McALLISTER
Jim**

Elected Sinn Fein representative for Armagh. Veteran republican activist from Crossmaglen.

**MACGIOLLA
Tomas**

Former president of Official Sinn Fein, now leader of the Workers Party. Presided over the 1969-70 split. Deported from Britain twice in 1972 although cleared of charges of Official IRA membership. MacGiolla has guided Official Sinn Fein along its transformation into the moderate reformist Workers Party. This was completed in 1982 when it removed the name Sinn Fein entirely from its title and MacGiolla won a seat in the Dail at the general election.



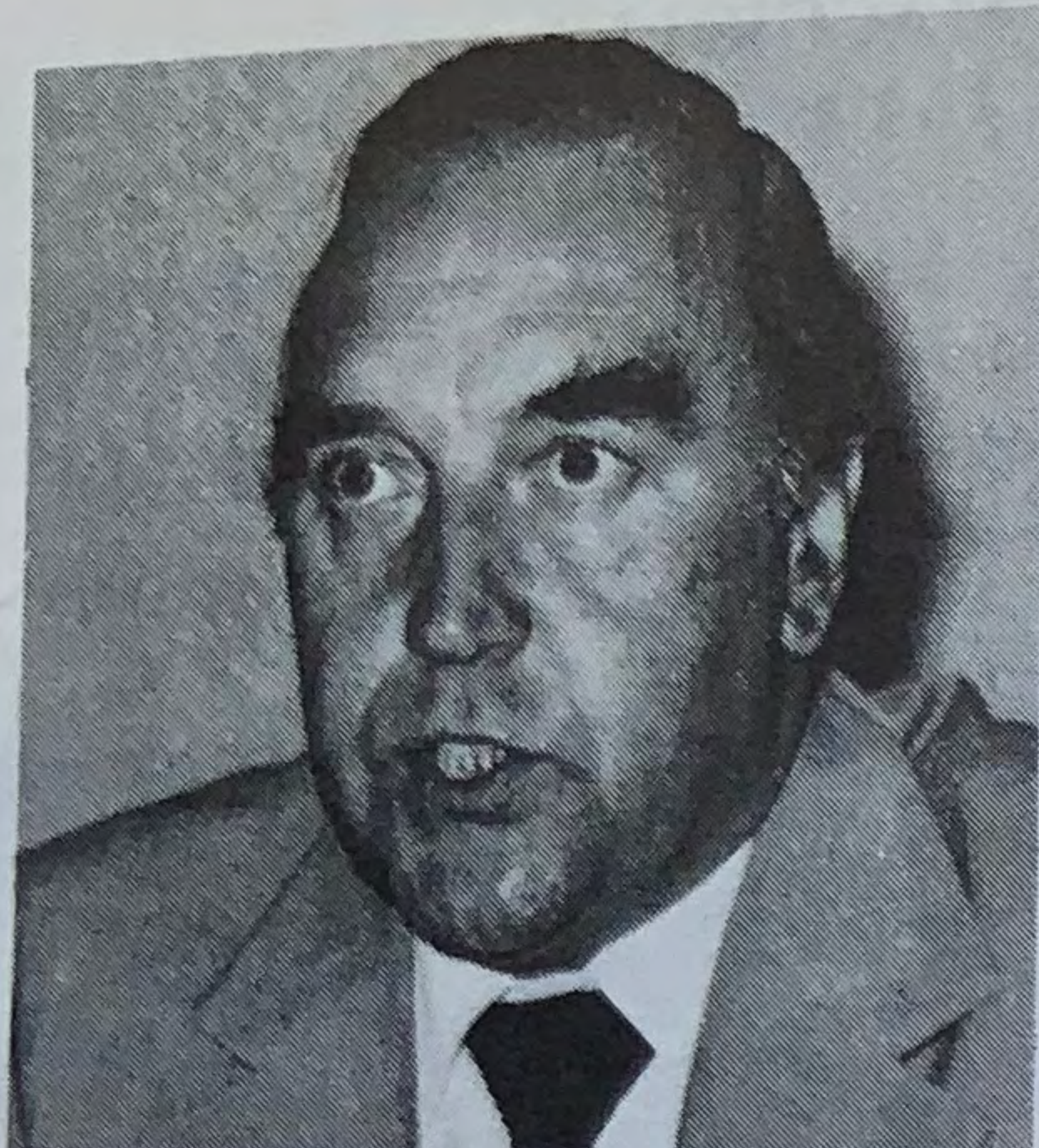
**McGUINNESS
Martin**

Elected Sinn Fein representative, Derry. Former leader Provisional IRA in Derry. Member of IRA delegation in secret talks with William Whitelaw in 1972. Imprisoned in Twenty-six Counties, 1973. Elected to 'Ulster Assembly' on abstentionist ticket, October 1982. Banned from London visit by Whitelaw, December 1982.



**MacSTIOFAIN
Sean**

Former IRA Chief of Staff. Born London 1938. Sentenced to eight years for stealing rifles from a school in Essex, 1953. Central role in building up the Provisional IRA in the Six Counties after 1969-70 split. Arrested in Dublin and jailed for six months, November 1972. In January 1973 gave up 57-day hunger-strike in prison. On release active in Sinn Fein political work.



**MASON
Roy**

Labour's Secretary of State for Northern Ireland 1976-79. Former miner, MP for Barnsley. Presided over intensified repression through an enlarged RUC, UDR, the use of the SAS and long-stay Army units. Regularly predicted the imminent collapse of the republican movement. Now lives in permanent fear of its retribution.

**MAUDLING
Reginald**

Tory Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, 1970-72. Tried to leave things to Stormont, but ended up having to impose Direct Rule after the Internment fiasco. Talked complacently about 'an acceptable level of violence', but left office with violence erupting on an unprecedented scale.

**MOLYNEUX
James**

Leader Official Unionist Party – and Deputy Grand Master of the Orange Institution. Fronts Enoch Powell's policy of total integration of the Six Counties into the UK.



**MORRISON
Danny**

Elected Sinn Fein representative, Mid-Ulster. Former internee, editor of *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, the weekly newspaper of the republican movement. Member of Sinn Fein delegation banned from visiting London, December 1982.

**NAPIER
Oliver**

Leader, Alliance Party. Belfast solicitor and city councillor. Popular in Britain and abroad – but not in Belfast. Failed to win East Belfast at 1979 General Election (came third) and won less than seven per cent of first-preference votes in the European elections.

**NEAVE
Airey**

Assassinated Tory Northern Ireland spokesman. Killed by car bomb in House of Commons car park in the INLA's most spectacular operation, March 1979. Former British war hero and close Thatcher acolyte, he called for even more draconian repression in Ireland.



**NEWMAN
Kenneth**

Former RUC Chief Constable, 1976-79, now Metropolitan police commander. Useful experience Palestine 1946-48, London 1948-73. Reorganised RUC and pioneered vicious interrogation techniques.



**O'BRADAIGH
Ruadhri**

President of Provisional Sinn Fein, 1970- . Former teacher and IRA leader. Sentenced in Dublin to six months imprisonment for IRA membership, 1973. Leading role in developing Sinn Fein's political programme, *Eire Nua*.



O'CONNAILL Daithi

Vice President Provisional Sinn Fein, 1974- . Born in Cork 1937. Wounded in 1956 campaign, imprisoned – and escaped. Imprisoned again for three years, 1960. Prominent IRA activist in early 'seventies. Key negotiator in 1975 ceasefire. Promoter of the concept of a federal Ireland adopted by Sinn Fein in 1972, but later rejected at the 1982 Ard Fheis. Arrested and imprisoned again in 1976 and 1977. Regular speaker at Sinn Fein rallies north and south of the border.

OLDFIELD Maurice

Chief Security Coordinator, 1979-81. Former head of MI6 from 1965 to 1977, 'M' was brought over to Belfast on his retirement to coordinate police and Army terror. It was too much for him – he had a heart attack and had to retire for good.

O'NEILL Terence (later Lord O'Neill of the Maine)

Stormont Prime Minister 1963-69. O'Neill's half-hearted attempts at reform and conciliation only exacerbated tensions in the Six Counties. As nationalist resistance flared and Loyalist intransigence became more strident, he had to give way to a more coercive Unionist approach.

ORME Stanley

Labour's Junior Northern Ireland Minister 1974-76. This left-winger

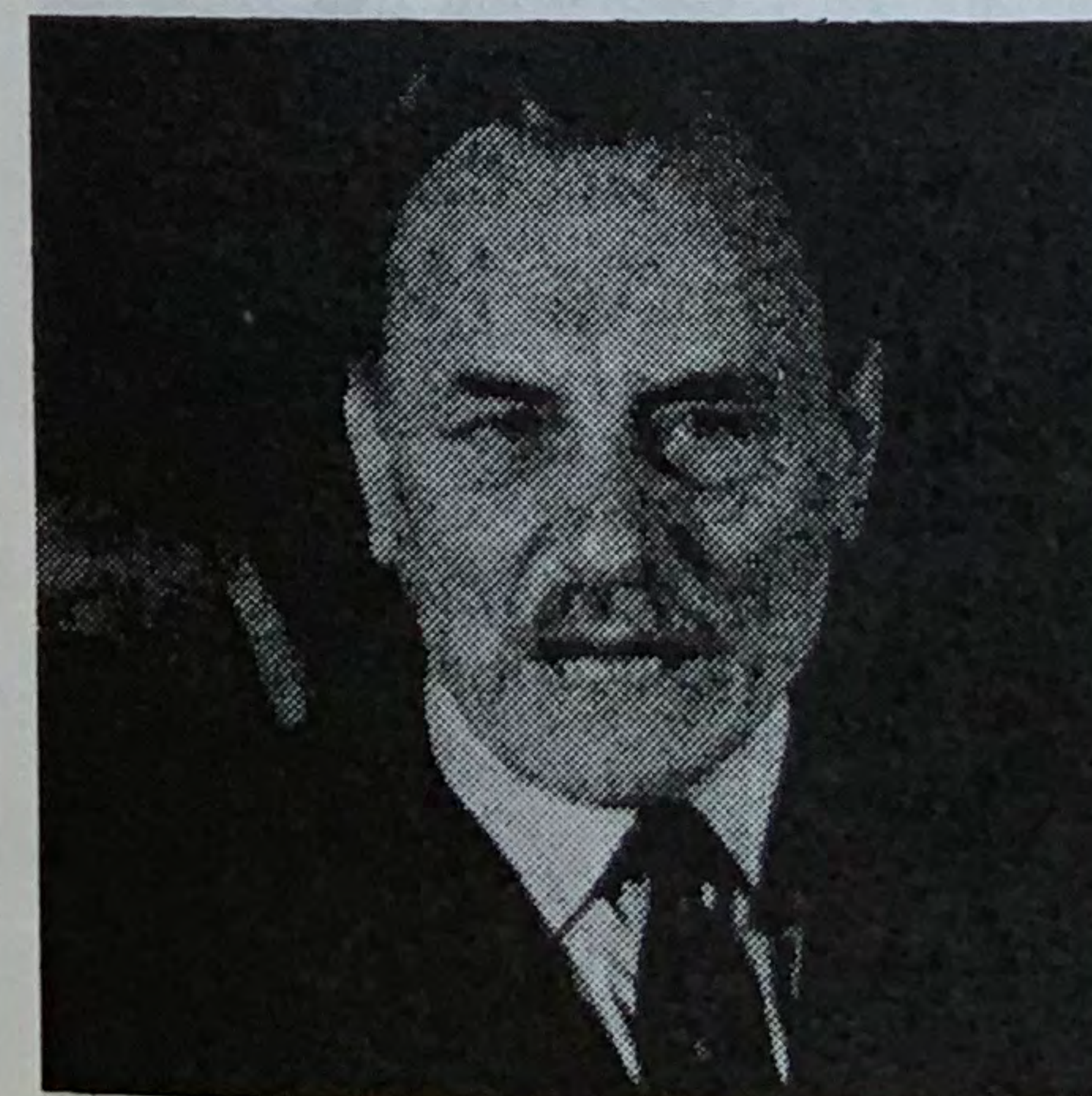
formerly spoke out against civil rights violations and Internment. As junior minister under Merlyn Rees, he became a consistent defender of the British occupation and virulent critic of the liberation movement.

PAISLEY Ian

Loyalist clergyman/politician. Founder Free Presbyterian Church 1951. Provoked riot over display of tricolour over nationalist headquarters during election campaign 1964. Denounced visit by Twenty-six Counties Prime Minister Sean Lemass to Stormont, 1965. Rallies, protests, demonstrations against any concessions to civil rights movement, 1968. Won Westminster seat at North Antrim, June 1970. Democratic Unionist Party established 1971. Disrupted assembly and supported UWC strike, 1974. Formed United Ulster Unionist Council with Harry West and William Craig – later collapsed after disagreements over the 1975 convention. Lost prestige as a result of too conciliatory approach towards some sort of power-sharing and the collapse of the attempted 1977 Loyalist strike. Revived popularity around calls for more repression and won major victory in 1979 European Parliament elections. Paisley's DUP consolidated its position in council elections in 1980 and in the 1982 Assembly elections. He remains the dominant figure of Ulster Loyalism.

POWELL Enoch

Tory, turned Unionist, politician. Following his break with the Conservative Party under Ted Heath in 1973, Powell was selected as Unionist candidate in South Down, which he won by a reduced majority in 1974. Powell has promoted the total integration of the Six Counties into the United





Kingdom – too forcefully for some of his Official Unionist colleagues who see their future in some sort of devolved administration. Nevertheless his articulate advocacy of British imperialist interests, his condemnations of the Twenty-six Counties and his success in manoeuvring at Westminster to increase the number of Unionist seats, have all strengthened his position among the Loyalists.

PYM **Francis**

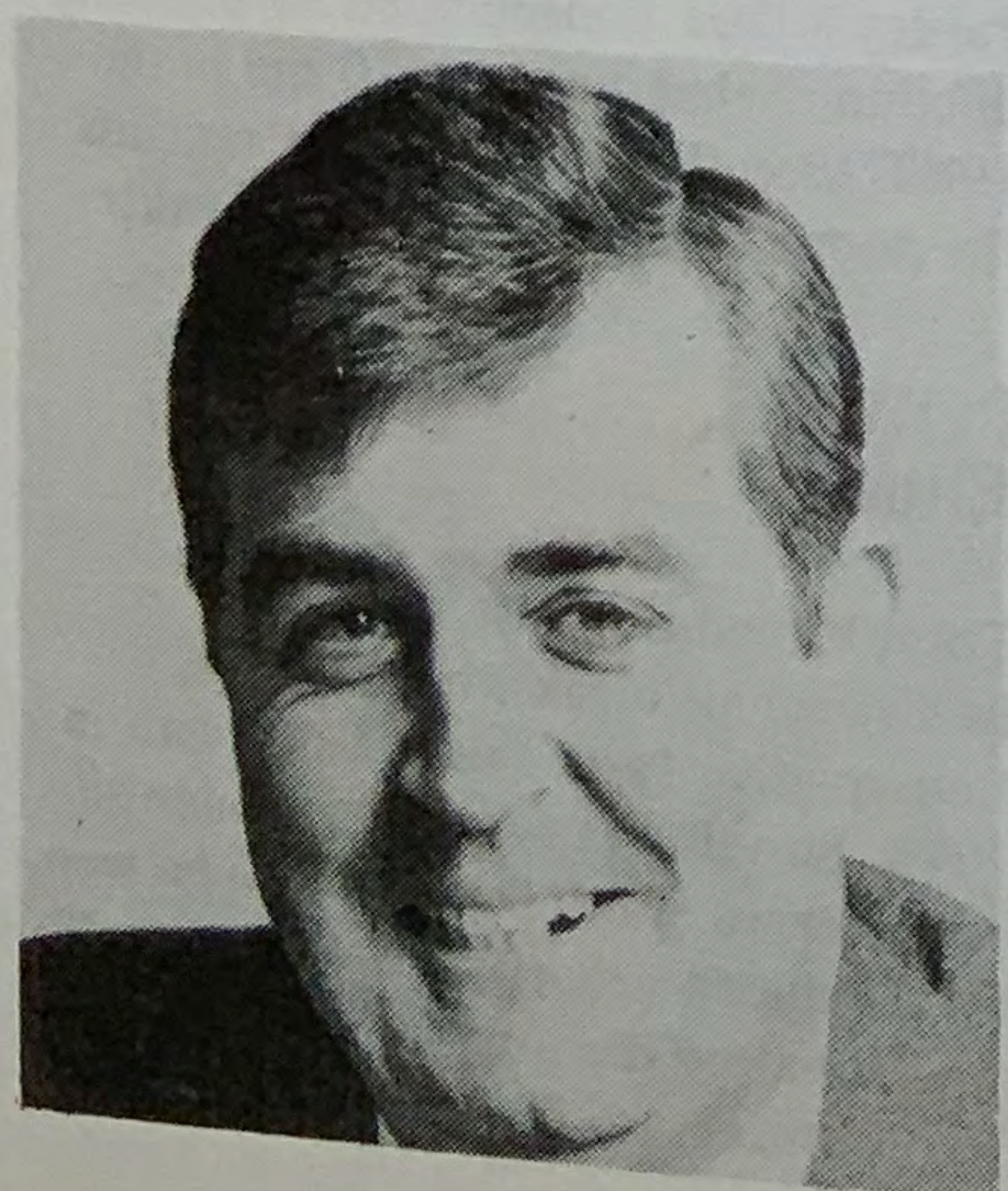
Tory Secretary of State for Northern Ireland 1973-74, now Foreign secretary. Caretaker Direct Ruler for three months, between Whitelaw and Rees, took part in Sunningdale conference (with both Whitelaw and Prime Minister Edward Heath) at which the ill-fated 'power-sharing' scheme was launched.

REES **Merlyn**

Labour Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, 1974-76. Rees took over just as the 'power-sharing' assembly, executive and the proposed council of Ireland were on the verge of disintegration; he moved on just after his own constitutional convention had finally collapsed. In the meantime it was terror as usual, behind the new guise of 'Ulsterisation'.

TAYLOR **John**

Official Unionist Member of the European Parliament. Former Stormont MP, part of hard-line Loyalist opposition to O'Neill. Survived assassination attempt by Official IRA, 1972. Periodic promoter of the notion of an 'independent Ulster'. Staunch defender



of the Union in Europe and resister of European intervention in the affairs of the 'United Kingdom'.

TUZO **General Sir Harry**

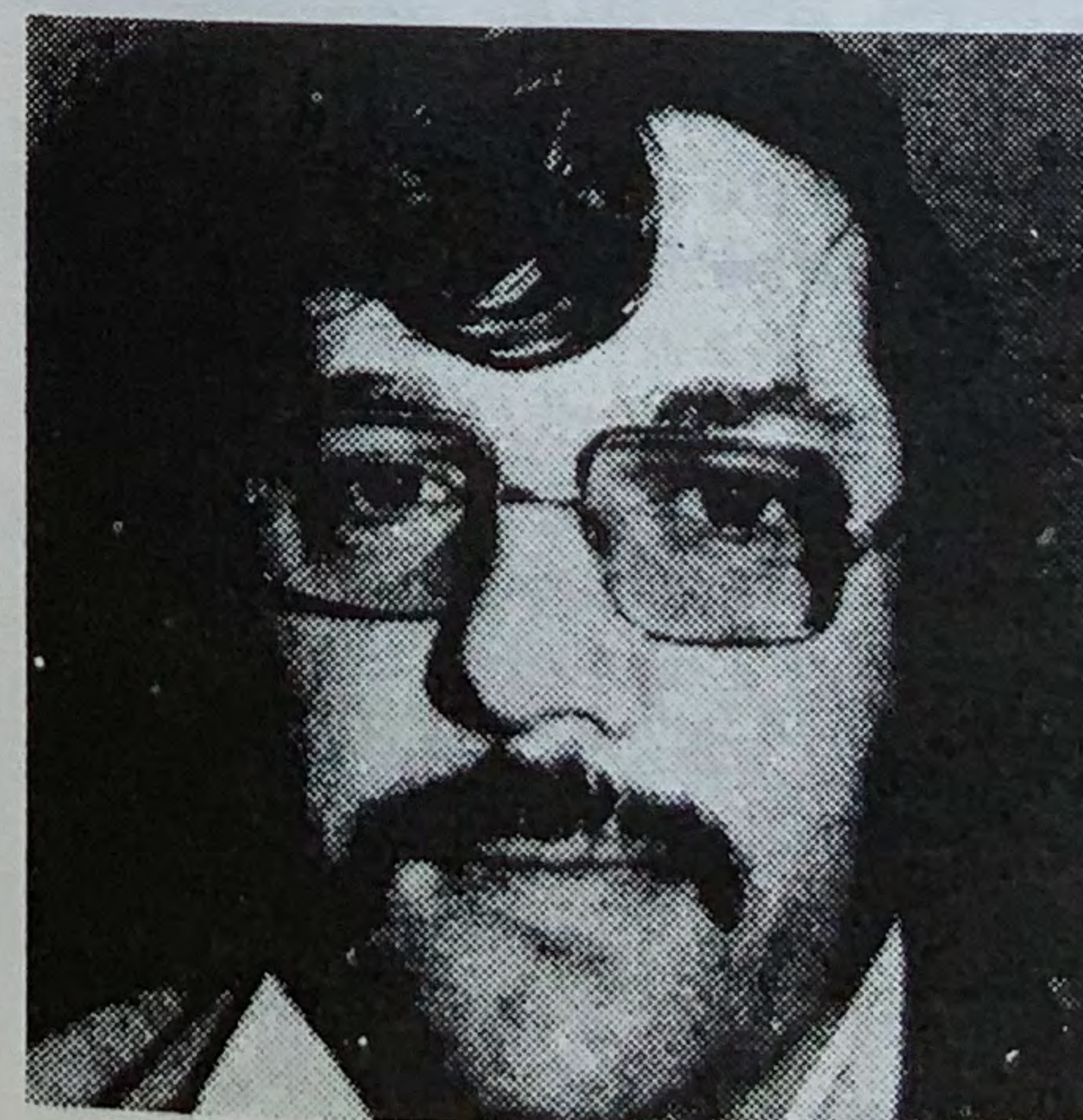
Army General Officer Commanding in Northern Ireland, 1971-73. Famous for blunt declarations of British strategy, he reckoned that about half the Catholics in the Six Counties had republican aspirations and about a quarter were prepared to support the IRA. Set up the undercover dirty tricks Military Reconnaissance Force and directed Operation Motorman.

TWOMEY **Seamus**

Belfast IRA leader. Leading role in reorganisation of Provisional IRA in Six Counties after 1969-70. Member of IRA delegation to negotiate with William Whitelaw in 1972. Arrested and imprisoned in Twenty-six Counties, March 1973. Spectacular helicopter escape from Mountjoy prison, Dublin, October 1973. Recaptured in Dublin, 1977 and imprisoned.

TYRIE **Andy**

Loyalist paramilitary leader, Commander UDA 1973- . Associated with New Ulster Political Research Group, the UDA's political front, 1979. This leader of the Six Counties' most vicious Loyalist paramilitary group, responsible for hundreds of sectarian murders, was sympathetically interviewed in the British Communist Party's *Marxism Today* in December 1981.



WEST Harry

Leader Official Unionist Party, 1974-79. Rich Fermanagh farmer and former Stormont minister, succeeded Faulkner as OUP leader. Rejected 'power-sharing' and other reforms and concessions to the nationalist community. Outflanked by Paisley as a result of his involvement in devolution talks with Mason 1977-79. Lost heavily to Paisley in 1979 European Parliament elections, resigned leadership in favour of Molyneux.



WHITELAW William

Tory Northern Ireland Secretary 1972-73. In the turmoil that followed the collapse of Stormont, Whitelaw's most celebrated initiative was inviting an IRA delegation for talks in London in July 1973. No terms could be agreed and a fragile truce soon ended. As Home Secretary almost a decade later Whitelaw banned a Sinn Fein delegation including two of the same people (Adams and McGuinness) from visiting London for informal talks with Ken Livingstone. Whitelaw also conceded political status to republican prisoners in response to a hunger-strike. At the same time he launched 'Operation Motorman' to reclaim the 'no-go' areas and moved ahead with the scheme for a 'power-sharing' assembly.

YOUNG Sir Arthur

Metropolitan police commissioner, Chief Constable RUC 1969-70. Sent in by Harold Wilson to reorganise RUC after the outbreak of 'the troubles'. Vital experience of fighting terrorism in Malaya.

2. Political organisations involved in the Irish War

Alliance Party

Launched in 1970 with a 'non-sectarian' appeal, the Alliance has never been more than a marginal Protestant middle class organisation. At the beginning it attracted some support away from the Official Unionist Party and the Northern Ireland Labour Party. It won around 10 per cent of the vote in the mid-'seventies 'power-sharing' assemblies. In the 1979 General Election fought all 12 seats but won none. The polarisation of the communities as the war continues has left little space for the Alliance's moderate approach its fortunes have stagnated.

Campaign for a Democratic Ulster

Labour Party pressure group, prominent in supporting demands for civil rights in the Six Counties, and now moribund. Backed by up to 100 left-wing Labour MPs, the CDU pressed Westminster to introduce democratic reforms – against the opposition of the Unionist establishment at Stormont. When the Six County state proved resistant to reform and conflict burst out onto the streets, the same MPs approved Westminster's next move – the despatch of thousands of British troops to the Six Counties. The Labour Party justified a measure necessary to preserve imperialist law and order as a progressive step to defend the Catholic community from Loyalist pogroms. Many CDU members – Stan Orme, Roy Hattersley, Michael Foot – have become consistent supporters of Britain's determination to keep 'Ulster' undemocratic by continuing the military occupation.

Campaign for Labour Representation

Stalinist Loyalism: the latest incarnation of the British and Irish Communist Organisation. In the early 'seventies this Stalinist faction developed the thesis, familiar to every British newspaper reader, that there are two separate nationalities in Ireland, one Catholic and one Protestant, and each is entitled to determine its own future. The BICO subsequently set about trying to recruit Loyalist workers in the Six Counties. Its latest tactic for achieving this is the campaign to persuade the British Labour Party to pursue the logic of its support for Partition and extend its organisation to 'this part of the United Kingdom'. Through skilful lobbying, the CLR has won gullible left-wing MP and national executive member Frank Allaun over to its position, and even had a hand in drafting the report to the 1981 conference which was sympathetic to the CLR point of view. Despite a sustained campaign of letter-writing to the national and labour movement press, the CLR is unlikely to progress much further in face of pragmatic resistance from Labour leaders in Britain (mindful of their Irish nationalist supporters) and trade union leaders

in the Six Counties (mindful of their 'non-sectarian' image). Publishes the lively Loyalist *Workers' Weekly* from Belfast.

Campaign for Social Justice

Catholic middle class pressure group for civil rights which began in Dungannon in 1964. It had close links with the Labour Party in Britain.

Communist Party of Ireland

A Stalinist rump, based in Belfast, with a membership heavily dependent on ageing trade union bureaucrats. From its beginning in 1920 the CPI has been small and isolated, achieving some influence only transiently in the militant unemployed struggles of the 'thirties; hence its heavy reliance on the Soviet Union. After 13 years of war it is still appealing to the British state to introduce democratic reforms in the Six Counties as the preliminary stage to reuniting the country. It unreservedly condemns the liberation struggle as an obstacle to Britain fulfilling its progressive role. It played some part in the early civil rights movement and influenced the degeneration of the Official IRA. As the war has continued the CPI has become more and more irrelevant. Its members are still in a majority on the pro-Loyalist Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions where they keep a characteristically low profile.

Connolly Association

A social circle of ageing Irish Stalinists in London. Publishes the *Irish Democrat* monthly, a curious collection of articles aimed at lobbying Labour MPs to oppose the Prevention of Terrorism Act, features on Irish history and extensive lyrics of Irish ballads.

Conservative Party

The party's formal title is Conservative and Unionist Party, but the war has severely strained the traditional ties between British Tories and Ulster Unionists. The abolition of the Stormont Parliament by Edward Heath's Conservative Government in 1972 was a bitter blow to the Unionist establishment. The division became even more bitter when Heath proposed 'power-sharing' in 1973 and the majority of Unionists came out against it. After the February 1974 General Election Unionist MPs no longer accepted the Conservative whip. Enoch Powell's defection to the Unionists – and his recommendation to vote Labour in 1974 – further soured relations. When Michael Foot negotiated tacit Unionist support for the Labour Government in return for more Unionist seats in the next Parliament, links with the Tories deteriorated even further. In their 1979 election manifesto the Tories courted Unionist support by promising to restore some powers to local government – i.e. the Loyalist establishment – in the Six Counties. While Direct Rule will inevitably cause continuing tensions between the Conservative Party and the Unionists, the Tories remain consistent defenders of the Union.

Democratic Unionist Party

Ian Paisley's political organisation. Founded in 1971 by Paisley and Shankill MP Desmond Boal on a platform of militant populist Loyalism. The DUP has outflanked the Official Unionists and won growing electoral support as the most consistent defender of the Union. In the 1973 Assembly elections the DUP won 10 per cent of first-preference votes, which it increased to almost 13 per cent in the 1975 Convention elections; in both contests the DUP stridently repudiated 'power-sharing'. In the 1979 General Election DUP candidates Peter Robinson and John McQuade both won seats at Westminster, where they remained firmly in the ample shadow of their party leader. Paisley's personal triumph came in the 1979 European elections in which he won 30 per cent of the first-preference vote. The DUP has subsequently increased its representation at the local council level, although it failed to win a majority over the Official Unionists in the October 1982 Assembly elections. The party may have lost some support because of its association with a homosexuality scandal at the Kincora boys' home in Belfast and because of the more moderate, statesmanlike, demeanor of their fiery leader. The DUP has won Loyalist support on its intransigent defence of the Union and its intense sectarian hostility towards Catholics. Any compromise on these principles will inevitably reduce Paisley's popularity.

Fianna Fail

The largest party in the Dail, the Twenty-six Counties' Parliament. Its origins lie in the republican faction in Sinn Fein which opposed the Partition Treaty of 1921, and fought a brief civil war against the pro-Treaty forces of the 'Irish Free State', backed by Britain. First came to power under Eamon de Valera in 1932 and has been the ruling party, except for brief periods, ever since. Currently led by Charles Haughey, Fianna Fail has long come to terms with Partition and British domination over Ireland. An essentially middle class party, it sustains rural and working class support through republican rhetoric and periodic anti-British gestures. Since the 1982 General Election Fianna Fail has been in opposition against a Fine Gael-Labour Party coalition Government. Despite its formal commitment to Irish unity, Fianna Fail has ruthlessly suppressed republicans in the Twenty-six Counties ever since it came to power in the 'thirties. In government, it has cooperated fully in British legal and military cross-border arrangements for dealing with 'terrorists'. It has fraternal relations with the SDLP in the Six Counties.

Fine Gael

The second largest party in the Dail in Dublin. It originates in the pro-Partition faction of Sinn Fein which formed the first 'Irish Free State' government under British patronage in 1921. Based on the big farmers and the pro-British professional and administrative elite, Fine Gael since the 'twenties has

proved incapable of mobilising sufficient popular support to form a majority government. Hence its brief spells of government 1948-51, 1954-57, 1973-77 and 1981-2 have always been in unstable coalitions – usually with the Labour Party. Under Garret Fitzgerald, the Party came out of the 1982 election in a strong enough position to form another coalition government with the Labour Party. It remains the more explicitly pro-British and pro-Partition of the two major parties; hence its leader's greater popularity in Britain.

Friends of Ireland

Opportunist grouping of Irish American politicians, including Edward Kennedy, Hugh Carey, Tip O'Neill, Daniel Moynihan. They condemn the national liberation struggle and propose a British-imposed political solution.

Irish Independence Party

A bridge between the SDLP and Sinn Fein. Formed in 1977 to articulate nationalist demands in response to the SDLP's capitulation to British imperialism and the republican movement's neglect of the political sphere. Support largely from Catholics in rural areas of the Six Counties. Won three per cent of the vote in the 1979 General Election, but did much better in council elections in 1981 as the alienation of the nationalist community grew during the hunger-strikes. Squeezed badly by the return of Sinn Fein to the electoral arena in 1982, the future seems bleak as the republican movement builds up its machine for the next general election.

Irish Labour Party

Ever since it abstained from taking a position on Partition in 1920, the Irish Labour Party has demonstrated the marginal scope that exists for a social democratic party in a country dominated by imperialism. The Irish Labour Party has fully adapted to the Partitionist, petit-bourgeois politics of the Twenty-six Counties. Deferential to Britain, the Dublin state and the Catholic Church, it has consistently condemned the national liberation struggle. It has pursued its own fortunes in coalitions with the explicitly pro-imperialist and anti-working class Fine Gael. One of its former leading members Conor Cruise O'Brien has become resident purveyor of anti-republican prejudice to the British establishment. Under Dick Spring, the party is currently in coalition government with Fine Gael.

Irish Northern Aid Committee (NORAID)

Republican fund-raising organisation in North America, led by veteran republican Martin Flannery. Its slogan is 'IRA all the way' and some of its leading members are currently up for trial on gun-running charges.

Irish National Caucus

Washington-based split from NORAID. Prominent members include Father Sean McManus, Fred Burns O'Brien and Rita Mullen. It does not send money overseas but seeks political influence through the Congressional Committee on Irish Affairs which it set up in 1977. It is supported by 130 Congressmen including Mario Biaggi, and seeks an orderly British withdrawal underwritten by American cash.

Irish National Liberation Army

Military wing of the Irish Republican Socialist Party. Its most celebrated operations include the assassination of Tory minister Airey Neave in March 1979 in London and the killing of a dozen British soldiers with a bomb in Ballykelly, near Derry in December 1982.

Irish Republican Socialist Party

Formed in 1974 after a split in Official Sinn Fein, the IRSP has sought to advance a distinctive republican socialist strategy. It has faced intense repression in the Six Counties, Twenty-six Counties and in Britain: its members have been framed, imprisoned and shot, detained and deported. It has also suffered in a murderous feud with the Official IRA in which several members, including its former leader Seamus Costello, were assassinated. Given its problems of finding a course between the militant republican politics of the Provisionals and the Stalinist/reformist politics of the Officials (later The Workers Party), the IRSP has had difficulty in consolidating a base of support on either side of the border.

Labour Party

Pro-imperialist organisation of the British labour bureaucracy. The Labour Party, in opposition and in government, has consistently supported the British domination of Ireland. It approved Partition in 1920 and consolidated it under the Labour Government in 1949. All members of the Party have repeatedly condemned the national liberation struggle. The Labour Government sent in the troops in 1969 and reinforced them under the 1974 to 1979 Labour administrations. Labour built the H-Blocks, brought in the Prevention of Terrorism Act and enforced 'criminalisation'. The Labour Party backed the Tories all the way against the hunger-strikers in 1980 and 1981 and approved the shoot-to-kill strategy in 1982 and 1983. At the same time, the Labour Party has always had to cope with pressure from socialists and Irish nationalist supporters of the Party. Hence it has always deprecated the excesses of British terror in Ireland, especially when the Tories have been in office, from the Black and Tans, through the 'B' Specials to the use of torture under Internment or plastic bullets against children. Labour has always expressed its sympathy for Irish unity as a distant goal (like socialism in Britain). Thus the 1981 party conference passed a resolution in favour of Irish unity, while approving the British occupation for the indefinite future. The function

of the left is to reconcile workers' anti-imperialist sentiments regarding the Irish War to the party's pro-imperialist policies of condemning the republican movement and promoting a British-imposed solution.

Liberal Party

A middle class pro-imperialist party. Originally the party of Gladstone's Home Rule Bills, the Liberals are better remembered as the party of Lloyd George's Treaty and Partition. Throughout the war the Liberals have maintained a consistent backing for British occupation and repression. In 1979 the Young Liberals decided in favour of British withdrawal as part of a long term solution involving the defeat of the national liberation struggle. They were warmly greeted by the British left, and a few dozen Young Liberals were invited to front its demonstration commemorating 10 years of British occupation. Although they are rumoured to be uneasy about plastic bullets they have not been seen since.

New Ulster Political Research Group

Political front for the Loyalist paramilitary Ulster Defence Association. Set up in January 1978 by Andy Tyrie and Glen Barr, on the platform of an 'independent Ulster'. The group has fared badly in elections, even in staunchly Loyalist areas, where people support the UDA for its military activities, and are little concerned about its politics.

Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association

The respectable face of the civil rights movement, set up in January 1967. NICRA incorporated the Campaign for Social Justice and included representatives of the British National Council for Civil Liberties, the Northern Ireland trade union bureaucracy, the Communist Party of Ireland, the Northern Ireland Labour Party, the Ulster Liberal Party and even the Young Unionist Group from Queens University, Belfast. It also included some republicans and socialists. However, its demands – one man one vote in council elections, an end to gerrymandering, public complaints machinery, fair allocation of housing, repeal of the Special Powers Act, the disbandment of the 'B' Specials – were profoundly subversive in the Six Counties state. Once the campaign provoked the violent reaction of the state and its Loyalist allies, NICRA tried to curb the protests. It was soon swept aside as its moderate middle class politicians pulled back, and the nationalist people took the fight for democratic rights into their own hands.

Northern Ireland Labour Party

Even more than the Labour Party in the Twenty-six Counties, the NILP demonstrates the irrelevance of reformism in the context of a war of national liberation. Since it formally endorsed Partition in 1949, the NILP has been a consistent defender of the Union. Although it gained some electoral support with the help of the British Labour Party in the 'fifties and 'sixties, it soon

faded again when the troubles erupted in the late 'sixties. When the formation of the SDLP in 1970 took away the vestiges of Catholic support that remained, the NILP became an exclusively Loyalist organisation. It has never won a Westminster seat and at the 1974 General Election won less than one per cent of the vote. It is now defunct.

Official Irish Republican Army

The now defunct consequence of the take-over of the republican movement by Stalinists in the 'sixties. This led to the split in December 1969-January 1970 from which the Provisional republican movement emerged. Demoralised and isolated after the defeat of the late 'fifties border campaign, the republican movement came under the influence of a small group of intellectuals formerly associated with the British Communist Party. As popular support and old activists withered away, this faction won the movement over to the three-stage strategy for national liberation, a formula familiar in the international Stalinist movement. The first stage was to unite Catholics and Protestants within a 'democratised' Six County state; the struggle for national unity and independence was postponed until the second stage; the final stage – socialism – lay in the indefinite future. The first stage meant the rejection of the two central pillars of the republican tradition – abstention from participation in the electoral institutions imposed on Ireland, North and South, by the British and the commitment to take up arms against the oppressor.

When British troops and Loyalist gangs attacked the nationalist community in 1969, the consequences of the political degeneration of the republican movement became apparent. It was still concerned with trying to press for democratic reforms within the Six County state that was oppressing the Catholics, and worst of all, the republican movement had neither organisation nor the weapons to defend the nationalist ghettos. Although in a minority, the Provisionals walked out and rapidly built up mass support for the military struggle against British imperialism. The Officials, dubbed 'the Stickies' or 'Sticks' from their use of adhesive labels for their Easter lilies at the 1970 commemorations of the 1916 Rising, stagnated. After a few military operations – the assassination of a Unionist senator and an off-duty British soldier from Derry, and the attempted assassination of Unionist MP John Taylor and the bomb attack on the Parachute Regiment's Aldershot base that killed seven people – the Officials declared a cease-fire in May 1972. Their military activities have subsequently been directed at anti-imperialists in the Provisionals and the IRSP, several of whom they have murdered.

The Officials have directed their political activities into the Republican Clubs in the Six Counties and the Workers Party in the Twenty-six Counties. Both combine Liberal Party-style community politics with strident condemnations of the national liberation struggle. Representatives of both organisations claim that the Official IRA has long been defunct.

Official Unionist Party

The dominant political party in the Six Counties from Partition until Direct Rule and still the majority representative of the Loyalist community. The tensions caused by the civil rights protests, culminating in the suspension of Stormont, destroyed the local power base of the Loyalist establishment and fragmented the Unionist Party. Supporters of Terence O'Neill (party leader 1963-69) moved to the Alliance Party in 1970 after he was squeezed out by Chichester-Clark (leader 1969-71); O'Neill's more extreme opponents followed William Craig into the Vanguard in 1972 or even joined Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party. Others followed Brian Faulkner (leader 1971-73) into the Unionist Party of Northern Ireland in 1973.

Loyalists have dealt harshly with any of their leaders who have shown any sign of making concessions to the nationalist community. Hence O'Neill was ousted for introducing minor reforms to the advantage of the Catholics; Chichester-Clark was dismissed for not pursuing a sufficiently coercive approach towards the emerging republican movement; Faulkner suffered humiliation after his endorsement of the 1974 'power-sharing' executive. Each Unionist Party leader has been succeeded by a more intransigent Loyalist: Faulkner was succeeded by Harry West who was himself replaced by James Molyneux in 1979 after West was trounced by Paisley in the European elections.

In the old days the Unionist Party held four-fifths of the seats at Stormont and 10 of the 12 Westminster seats for the Six Counties. At the 1970 General Election OUP representation dropped to eight as Ian Paisley and three nationalists (Frank McManus, Gerry Fitt and Bernadette Devlin) won seats. In the February 1974 General Election the OUP linked up with Vanguard and the DUP in an anti-'power-sharing' bloc – the United Ulster Unionist Council. The UUUC won 11 of the 12 seats, but of these three went to Vanguard and two to DUP candidates. The UUUC collapsed in 1977 after Vanguard leader William Craig adopted a conciliatory approach to the SDLP. As Craig followed the same fate as O'Neill, Chichester-Clark and Faulkner before him, the struggle for the mandate of the Loyalist community was now between the OUP and Paisley's DUP. At the 1974 General Election the DUP won three seats and 10 per cent of the votes. The OUP remained in front with five seats and 36 per cent of the votes. The DUP continued to advance in the 1981 council elections, but fell short of winning a majority over the OUP in the 1982 Assembly elections.

The OUP has survived by adopting more extreme Loyalist postures, but Direct Rule still weakens and divides the party. It is split between two factions. One, led by party leader Molyneux and his 'brains' Enoch Powell, favours total integration into the United Kingdom. The other, fronted by Euro MP John Taylor and the recently-assassinated Robert Bradford, calls for the return of some devolved government to the Loyalist establishment in the Six Counties. As long as Direct Rule continues the OUP leaders are destined to squabble over the favours dished out from Westminster, while

constantly looking over their shoulder in fear of being out-manoeuvred by Paisley or by some other extreme populist manifestation of Loyalism.

Orange Order

Loyalist community organisation. The Loyal Orange Institution owes its name to King William the Third of the Netherlands (William of Orange) who, with the support of the Pope, defeated the forces of the Catholic King James the Second at the historic battles of the Boyne (1690) and Aughrim (1691). The Order has helped to cohere the Protestant community against the Catholics since the eighteenth century. It fought Home Rule until Partition and subsequently has staunchly defended the Union. Most Unionist politicians are Orangemen and there is a branch at the House of Commons. It has between 80 000 and 100 000 members in the Six Counties.

Provisional Irish Republican Army

The leading force in the anti-imperialist struggle in Ireland. The Provisionals emerged from the split in the republican movement in December 1969-January 1970. They responded to the immediate need for defence of the nationalist community in the Six Counties. Under the leadership of Sean MacStiofain, the Provisionals reorganised their military activities from scratch, especially relying on veteran Belfast republicans Joe Cahill, Seamus Twomey and Billy McKee. They soon attracted a new generation of activists to the republican cause. When Internment based on outdated intelligence rounded up a much higher proportion of Officials, the Provisionals were in a position to assume the leading role in the war: in the succeeding months their operations took a heavy toll of military and business targets. In July 1972 the British flew a Provisional delegation including MacStiofain, Twomey, Adams, O'Connell and McGuinness to London for abortive cease-fire talks.

The arrests of MacStiofain and Cahill in 1972 and 1973 – and of Twomey in 1977 – opened up the leadership of the movement to a younger generation. In the mid-'seventies there were a series of attempted cease-fires and republicans operated transient 'truce monitoring centres'. There were even (unsuccessful) attempts at reaching a rapprochement with the Loyalists. Increased sectarian murders and intensified state repression damaged the authority and effectiveness of the Provisionals. However the reorganisation of the Provisionals from a brigade into a cell structure improved morale and operational efficiency in 1978 and 1979. The assassination of Lord Mountbatten and 18 British soldiers on the same day in different corners of the country was a spectacular achievement in August 1979.

The hunger-strikes, led by IRA prisoners and supported by INLA prisoners in the H-Blocks in 1980 and 1981, did much to raise the prestige of the Provisionals in the nationalist community. The success of the Provisional IRA in shooting soldiers and policemen in response to the latest round of shoot-to-kill murders of unarmed nationalists in 1982 and 1983 confirms its essential role as the military resistance to the British occupying forces.

Provisional Sinn Fein

The political wing of the Provisional IRA, now simply known as Sinn Fein, on both sides of the border. The Provisionals rejected the consequences of the programme of the Officials; they never produced a systematic critique of its politics. Instead they returned to the 'Democratic socialist republic' formula outlined by radical republicans in the period before Partition. Eire Nua, the programme produced in 1972 calls for extensive nationalisation and the widespread formation of cooperatives. It also proposes a federal system of government devolved to the four historical provinces of Ireland. The programme expresses the dreams of small farmers and small businessmen in the Ireland of 70 years ago. It is no answer to the needs of working class supporters of the anti-imperialist struggle in the Ireland of today. The 1982 Ard Fheis rejected the concession to Loyalism implicit in the federalist proposals – but the rest of the programme stands.

In 1982 Sinn Fein declared its intention of contesting elections in both the Six Counties and the Twenty-six Counties, alongside the continuing military struggle against British rule. In the Six Counties its candidates – especially those most associated with the Provisionals' campaign – did very well in the 1982 Assembly elections, winning five seats. Sinn Fein intends to stand many more candidates in the forthcoming general election. In the Twenty-six Counties Sinn Fein has not fared so well. Although it has some representatives on local councils in rural areas it has failed to win seats in the Dail or win significant urban support. Support for the national struggle has been contained by the republican rhetoric of Fianna Fail. And potential working class support for the national struggle has been neutralised by the activities of reformist politicians in the unions.

Red Hand Commandos

A Loyalist paramilitary group involved in sectarian assassinations in 1972 and 1973. Linked to the Ulster Volunteer Force and the Ulster Defence Association and banned in 1973 at the same time as another UDA front, the Ulster Freedom Fighters.

Republican Clubs

Offspring of the Official IRA in the Six Counties. Some localised support in Belfast based on community work around housing and employment issues. Vehemently (and occasionally violently) hostile to republicans, the Republican Clubs won less than two per cent of the total poll in the 1979 General Election.

Smash the Prevention of Terrorism Act Campaign

Campaign initiated by the Revolutionary Communist Party in 1979 against the PTA. Organised practical assistance and protest actions in support of PTA victims. Campaigned against the PTA from an anti-imperialist perspective, particularly in trade unions. Organised a series of labour movement

conferences, most notably a large gathering of trade unionists in support of the hunger-strikers at Coventry in 1981. The campaign sponsored the Workers March for Irish Freedom from Manchester to the TUC in Blackpool in September 1981 in support of the hunger-strikers and in protest at the pro-imperialist stand of the trade union leadership. At its February 1982 conference, the Smash the PTA Campaign decided to broaden out its activities and launched the Irish Freedom Movement.

Social Democratic and Labour Party

Middle class Catholic party in the Six Counties. Formed in August 1970, it incorporated a number of Catholic nationalist groupings and seven Stormont politicians. The party included Gerry Fitt who became its first leader; civil rights campaigners John Hume, Ivan Cooper, Paddy O'Hanlon and Austin Currie; Paddy Devlin, formerly NILP MP, expelled from SDLP in 1977, now a trade union bureaucrat; and Paddy Wilson, murdered in a sectarian attack in 1973. Set up to promote reforms through Stormont, the SDLP was forced to withdraw from the Loyalist Parliament in July 1971 in response to pressure from the nationalist community after the security forces killed two youths in Derry.

The SDLP has participated in every charade performed by the British state to disguise its coercive strategy in the Six Counties. In late 1971 it set up the Assembly of the Northern Irish People – 'the Dungiven Parliament' – to court a British solution which would give some recognition to moderate representatives of the nationalist community. After Direct Rule was imposed it proposed a new assembly under joint London and Dublin control. In 1973 it settled for the 'power-sharing' assembly and executive set up under British control after the Sunningdale conference with the token Council of Ireland tacked on. When Loyalist intransigence wrecked this sham in 1974, the SDLP moved on to pursue new forms of collaboration – through the convention in 1979, talks with Mason in 1976-78, with Atkins in 1980 and with Prior in 1981-82.

Until the 1982 Assembly elections the SDLP commanded virtually unchallenged electoral support within the nationalist community. In the 1973 assembly elections it won more than 20 per cent of the first preference votes – a figure which held steady in both Westminster elections in 1974. In the 1979 General Election the SDLP won 18 per cent of the votes and party leader John Hume polled almost 25 per cent of the first-preference votes in the European Parliament election. In the 1982 Assembly elections, however, it was challenged for the first time by Sinn Fein which won five seats.

The intensification of the conflict since the hunger-strikes in 1981 and the collapse of the economy in 1982 has undermined support for the SDLP's moderate and conciliatory approach to British imperialism. The party leadership has been pushed into a more nationalist position by rank and file dissent and it now faces a growing threat from Sinn Fein in local council and Westminster elections.

Provisional Sinn Fein

The political wing of the Provisional IRA, now simply known as Sinn Fein, on both sides of the border. The Provisionals rejected the consequences of the programme of the Officials; they never produced a systematic critique of its politics. Instead they returned to the 'Democratic socialist republic' formula outlined by radical republicans in the period before Partition. Eire Nua, the programme produced in 1972 calls for extensive nationalisation and the widespread formation of cooperatives. It also proposes a federal system of government devolved to the four historical provinces of Ireland. The programme expresses the dreams of small farmers and small businessmen in the Ireland of 70 years ago. It is no answer to the needs of working class supporters of the anti-imperialist struggle in the Ireland of today. The 1982 Ard Fheis rejected the concession to Loyalism implicit in the federalist proposals – but the rest of the programme stands.

In 1982 Sinn Fein declared its intention of contesting elections in both the Six Counties and the Twenty-six Counties, alongside the continuing military struggle against British rule. In the Six Counties its candidates – especially those most associated with the Provisionals' campaign – did very well in the 1982 Assembly elections, winning five seats. Sinn Fein intends to stand many more candidates in the forthcoming general election. In the Twenty-six Counties Sinn Fein has not fared so well. Although it has some representatives on local councils in rural areas it has failed to win seats in the Dail or win significant urban support. Support for the national struggle has been contained by the republican rhetoric of Fianna Fail. And potential working class support for the national struggle has been neutralised by the activities of reformist politicians in the unions.

Red Hand Commandos

A Loyalist paramilitary group involved in sectarian assassinations in 1972 and 1973. Linked to the Ulster Volunteer Force and the Ulster Defence Association and banned in 1973 at the same time as another UDA front, the Ulster Freedom Fighters.

Republican Clubs

Offspring of the Official IRA in the Six Counties. Some localised support in Belfast based on community work around housing and employment issues. Vehemently (and occasionally violently) hostile to republicans, the Republican Clubs won less than two per cent of the total poll in the 1979 General Election.

Smash the Prevention of Terrorism Act Campaign

Campaign initiated by the Revolutionary Communist Party in 1979 against the PTA. Organised practical assistance and protest actions in support of PTA victims. Campaigned against the PTA from an anti-imperialist perspective, particularly in trade unions. Organised a series of labour movement

conferences, most notably a large gathering of trade unionists in support of the hunger-strikers at Coventry in 1981. The campaign sponsored the Workers March for Irish Freedom from Manchester to the TUC in Blackpool in September 1981 in support of the hunger-strikers and in protest at the pro-imperialist stand of the trade union leadership. At its February 1982 conference, the Smash the PTA Campaign decided to broaden out its activities and launched the Irish Freedom Movement.

Social Democratic and Labour Party

Middle class Catholic party in the Six Counties. Formed in August 1970, it incorporated a number of Catholic nationalist groupings and seven Stormont politicians. The party included Gerry Fitt who became its first leader; civil rights campaigners John Hume, Ivan Cooper, Paddy O'Hanlon and Austin Currie; Paddy Devlin, formerly NILP MP, expelled from SDLP in 1977, now a trade union bureaucrat; and Paddy Wilson, murdered in a sectarian attack in 1973. Set up to promote reforms through Stormont, the SDLP was forced to withdraw from the Loyalist Parliament in July 1971 in response to pressure from the nationalist community after the security forces killed two youths in Derry.

The SDLP has participated in every charade performed by the British state to disguise its coercive strategy in the Six Counties. In late 1971 it set up the Assembly of the Northern Irish People – 'the Dungiven Parliament' – to court a British solution which would give some recognition to moderate representatives of the nationalist community. After Direct Rule was imposed it proposed a new assembly under joint London and Dublin control. In 1973 it settled for the 'power-sharing' assembly and executive set up under British control after the Sunningdale conference with the token Council of Ireland tacked on. When Loyalist intransigence wrecked this sham in 1974, the SDLP moved on to pursue new forms of collaboration – through the convention in 1979, talks with Mason in 1976-78, with Atkins in 1980 and with Prior in 1981-82.

Until the 1982 Assembly elections the SDLP commanded virtually unchallenged electoral support within the nationalist community. In the 1973 assembly elections it won more than 20 per cent of the first preference votes – a figure which held steady in both Westminster elections in 1974. In the 1979 General Election the SDLP won 18 per cent of the votes and party leader John Hume polled almost 25 per cent of the first-preference votes in the European Parliament election. In the 1982 Assembly elections, however, it was challenged for the first time by Sinn Fein which won five seats.

The intensification of the conflict since the hunger-strikes in 1981 and the collapse of the economy in 1982 has undermined support for the SDLP's moderate and conciliatory approach to British imperialism. The party leadership has been pushed into a more nationalist position by rank and file dissent and it now faces a growing threat from Sinn Fein in local council and Westminster elections.

Tara

Loyalist secret society based in Belfast. Virulently sectarian.

Troops Out Movement

Leading Irish solidarity organisation in Britain in the 'seventies. Formed in 1973, it modified its demands for 'Troops Out' from the beginning in the hope of attracting liberal and reformist support. These hopes were never fulfilled and the movement virtually collapsed in the late 'seventies as the left-wing groups that sponsored it – the International Marxist Group and the Socialist Workers Party – turned away from the Irish War in face of the pressures of British public opinion. The movement has staggered on, turning from women, to blacks, to the Irish community in the search for some response to its moralistic appeals. It has come to rest, like many similar radical campaigns, within the orbit of the Labour Party. Now moribund, TOM still organises occasional protests in association with the Labour Party and periodic excursions to the Six Counties to revive the spirits of its dwindling supporters.

Ulster Army Council

Loyalist paramilitary coordinating body during the 1974 Ulster Workers Council strike. It involved the UDA, UVF, Ulster Special Constabulary Association (former 'B' Specials), Orange Volunteers and Red Hand Commandos.

Ulster Defence Association

Loyalist paramilitary organisation. Populist-style movement which linked up Loyalist vigilante groups in 1971, and excluded MPs and clergymen from its ranks. Organised thousands of Loyalist workers in military parades in Belfast in 1972 and patrolled 'no-go' areas. The major force behind the 1974 Ulster Workers Council strike that brought down the 'power-sharing' assembly. The membership of the UDA overlaps with that of the RUC and the British Army's Ulster Defence Regiment. Its involvement in the campaign of vicious sectarian murders in the Six Counties is beyond dispute, but the UDA remains a legal organisation. Many of its members have been imprisoned on charges of murder and other firearms offences. In 1979, 11 members of the UDA in Scotland were given heavy prison sentences on gun-running and intimidation charges. Apart from a spate of murderous attacks on republican activists in the winter of 1980-81, Loyalist paramilitaries have been relatively inactive in recent years, in recognition of the increased terrorist activities of the British security forces.

Ulster Freedom Fighters

A UDA front, banned by the British authorities in 1973.

Ulster Protestant Action Group

Another UDA front, responsible for numerous sectarian murders in 1974.

Ulster Volunteer Force

Loyalist paramilitary organisation, deriving its name from Carson's anti-Home Rule militia in the pre-Partition period. Began campaign of sectarian terror with two murders in 1966, for which it was banned and its charismatic leader Gusty Spence imprisoned. Carried on sectarian assassinations during the 'seventies. In 1977, 26 UVF were given a total of 700 years in jail on 55 charges including four murders. In 1979 nine UVF members were imprisoned in Scotland on firearms and explosives charges.

Ulster Workers Council

Organising committee of the 1974 Loyalist strike which brought down the 'power-sharing' assembly. A model of efficient and coordinated industrial action which paralysed the Six Counties economy within days with the object of blocking even a token gesture away from British domination over Ireland. The council included Unionist politicians, Loyalist paramilitaries and Loyalist trade unionists. West, Paisley and Craig represented the different factions of Unionism; Tyrie (UDA), Hannigan (UVF) and several others provided military muscle; Jim Smyth, Harry Murray and Billy Kelly mobilised engineers, shipyard workers and power workers to bring the economy to a standstill. The UWC mobilised again in 1977 to press for more vigorous repression of the nationalist community. When the British authorities acquiesced immediately to its key demands, support for strike action dwindled away.

Unionist Party of Northern Ireland

Now defunct Unionist faction in favour of 'power-sharing'. Set up by Brian Faulkner after the collapse of the 'power-sharing' assembly in 1974. It won less than three per cent of the vote in the October 1974 General Election. It won almost eight per cent of the votes in the 1975 convention elections and enjoyed the support of prominent retired Unionist politicians Lord Brookeborough (Stormont Prime Minister 1943-63) and Lord Moyola (formerly Chichester-Clark). There was however little support in the Loyalist community for the UPNI's conciliatory approach towards Catholics. In the 1979 General Election it won just over one per cent of the vote; in the European elections it won slightly less than one per cent. The party collapsed shortly afterwards.

Unity Movement

A radical nationalist grouping around Fermanagh-South Tyrone MP Frank McManus in the early 'seventies. McManus held this seat from 1970 to 1974 when he lost it to Official Unionist Harry West. In 1977 McManus was a co-founder of the Irish Independence Party.

Vanguard

Unionist political movement led by William Craig from 1972 to 1978. Began as extreme Loyalist opposition to the conciliatory approach of the Official

Unionist Party before Direct Rule. It had strong paramilitary support and staged massive fascist-style rallies. In 1973 the Ulster Vanguard became the Vanguard Unionist Progressive Party and won 10 per cent of the first-preference votes in the Assembly elections. In the 1974 General Election it won three seats under the United Ulster Unionist Council umbrella (with the DUP and the OUP). When Craig came out in favour of negotiations and even cooperation with the SDLP after the 1975 convention the Vanguard split, to collapse finally in 1977. In the 1979 Westminster election Craig, after returning to the OUP, lost his seat, East Belfast, to the DUP by a tiny margin of 64 votes.

Workers Party

Moderate reformist organisation in the Twenty-six Counties. The degeneration product of the Stalinist Official IRA, via Official Sinn Fein and Sinn Fein the Workers Party. It finally dropped Sinn Fein from its title in 1982.

The Workers Party pursued the logic of the Official IRA's 'stages theory' of political development in Ireland in its programmatic document *The Irish Industrial Revolution* published in 1977. The Officials had already reduced their sights from socialism (on the most distant horizon), and even from national independence (still a remote objective), to campaigning for reforms within the structures established by British domination on both sides of the border. The Workers Party has identified imperialism as a progressive force in Ireland: it came out in favour of government measures to promote European, American and British investment. The only obstacles to progress in Ireland were its 'incompetent, inefficient and greedy' small employers – and the struggle against imperialism being carried out by the republican movement.

The Workers Party's promotion of state intervention and its dogged bureaucratic style of operation have won it some support among trade union officials in Ireland's large public sector. Its advocacy of tax reform and other trade union concerns has drawn a degree of electoral support in urban areas. In 1981 its first TD (MP) Joe Sherlock was elected in Cork, to be followed in February 1982 by Proinsias de Rossa in Dublin and Paddy Gallagher in Waterford.

In the November 1982 General election Gallagher and Sherlock lost their seats, but party leader Tomas MacGiolla was returned, along with de Rossa in Dublin. The Party has already proved willing to cooperate in imposing anti-working class budgets. Its reliance on Ireland's fragile trade union bureaucracy seems likely to pull it even further to the right as the country plunges deeper into recession.

3. Chronology of the Irish War

The build-up to war

- 1921 Partition finalised, Stormont and the 'Irish Free State' established.
- 1949 Twenty-six Counties declared 'Irish Republic'.
Integration of Six Counties into the 'United Kingdom' reinforced by Labour Government.
- 1956-62 Border campaign by IRA; Internment in Six and Twenty-six Counties.
- 1965 Talks between Stormont premier Terence O'Neill and Dublin Taoiseach Sean Lemass provoke Loyalist reaction from Ian Paisley and others.
- 1966 UVF opens campaign of sectarian murders, killing two Catholics.
- 1967 NICRA formed.
- 1968 **October:** Civil rights march in Derry attacked by RUC.
Peoples Democracy formed by students in Belfast.
- 1969 **January:** Civil rights march attacked by Loyalists at Burntollet Bridge en route from Belfast to Derry.
March: Power station blown up by UVF – IRA blamed.
April: Bernadette Devlin elected MP for Mid-Ulster.
O'Neill succeeded by James Chichester-Clark as Stormont Prime Minister.
July: Rioting. Elderly Catholic killed by RUC in Derry.
August: Rioting in Belfast and Derry. Battle of the Bogside leads to intervention of British Army, first in Derry and two days later in Belfast.

Repression and resistance

- 1969 **August:** Six Counties invaded by British Army; by the end of the year almost 8000 strong.
October: 'B' Specials to be disbanded – and replaced by the Ulster Defence Regiment, under direct British Army control.
RUC reorganised.
First RUC man killed – by Loyalists in Belfast.
December: Split in IRA – into Provisionals and Officials.
- 1970 **April:** UDR inaugurated. Army uses batons and CS gas against nationalist rioters in Belfast. Army GOC Freeland threatens to shoot rioters on sight.
June: Provisionals defend Short Strand from Loyalist attack: four killed, Billy McKee wounded.
July: British Army imposes Falls Road curfew – five Catholics killed, 60 injured and hundreds of homes devastated.
- 1971 **February:** Provisionals shoot first British soldier.
March: Three Scottish soldiers shot dead in Belfast.

April: Provisionals bombing campaign begins – 37 explosions in one month.

July: Army shoot two boys dead in Derry – three days of rioting. Bombing campaign intensifies: 91 explosions.

August: Internment – 340 Catholics and two Protestants detained. Rioting and street-fighting all over Six Counties. 'No-go' areas established; sectarian pogrom in Belfast. In four days, 22 killed – mainly Catholic civilians. Rent and rate strike begins.

September: All marches declared illegal – 15 000 attend anti-Internment protest in Belfast.

December: McGurk's bar blown up by UVF in Belfast: 15 Catholics killed.

Thirty simultaneous bombings in Six Counties.

Christmas Day: Anti-Internment march from Belfast to Long Kesh blocked by British Army.

1972 **January:** Bloody Sunday in Derry: 13 unarmed civil rights demonstrators shot dead by British Army, another died later from injuries.

February: British embassy burned down during mass demonstration in Dublin.

Two Catholics shot leaving work in Belfast: campaign of sectarian intimidation intensifies – many Catholics lose their jobs, some their lives.

March: Stormont minister John Taylor survives Official IRA assassination attempt.

Abercorn restaurant in Belfast bombed – two women killed and 130 injured, many severely.

Donegal street car bomb kills six – including two RUC men.

Direct Rule imposed.

May: Official IRA kill Ranger William Best a Derry Catholic member of the British Army – prompts angry response from some nationalist women.

Official IRA calls unconditional cease-fire.

Kelly's pub bombing – five Catholics killed.

UDA begins open drilling.

June: Provisionals declare 'bilateral truce'.

Whitelaw concedes special category status after hunger-strike by republican veteran Billy McKee.

July: Whitelaw meets Provisional delegation in London.

Cease-fire breaks down in Lenadoon, Belfast.

'Bloody Friday': 26 bombs in Belfast kill two soldiers and nine civilians.

Operation Motorman: 'no-go' areas smashed in Belfast and Derry.

Eight killed by car-bombs in Claudy, Co Derry.

November: Provisional leader Sean MacStiofain arrested in Twenty-six Counties; gives up hunger-strike.

Provisionals launch RPG7 rocket attacks on British posts.

December: Bombs in Dublin kill two people and injure 80 while the Dail is debating new repressive legislation. In the Six Counties 467 deaths in 12 months.

1973 **March:** Provisional IRA arms shipment intercepted on the *Claudia* off Waterford, Joe Cahill arrested.

July: Diplock 'no-jury' courts established.

October: Six hijackings and bombings in single week.

Helicopter escape from Mountjoy prison Dublin by three Provisional leaders.

November: Belfast-Derry railway link blown up, land mine at Omagh, three police and Army posts attacked in Derry, two soldiers killed in Bogside, bomb attack on Army post in Belfast.

December: In 12 months, 250 dead.

1974 **January:** Republican air force drops two milk-churn bombs on Strabane police station from hijacked helicopter.

March: Two massive car bombs devastate central Belfast.

April: RUC to be reorganised and reinforced to take on 'responsibility for law and order'.

May: During Loyalist UWC strike 27 killed by Loyalist car bombs in Dublin and Monaghan.

August: Mass escape 19 republican prisoners from Portlaoise. Police chief assassinated in Omagh.

September: Two judges shot in Belfast.

October: Long Kesh burnt down in prison riot; prisoners brutally assaulted by Army and prison guards.

Disturbances at Magilligan and Armagh prisons.

November: Mass escape from Long Kesh through tunnel – but prisoners later re-captured; one prisoner shot dead.

December: Prevention of Terrorism Act rushed through in response to Birmingham bombings in Britain, extended to Six Counties. Dublin government introduced new law to allow its courts to try republicans for their military activities in Britain or the Six Counties. Negotiations between Provisionals and British authorities through Protestant clergymen at Feakle, Co Clare lead to temporary Christmas truce.

Riot of republican prisoners at Portlaoise prison in the Twenty-six Counties.

In 1974, 216 people died in the Irish War.

1975 **January:** Provisional cease-fire extended to 16 January, then called off.

February: Provisionals call new cease-fire and set up incident centres to monitor it in liaison with government officials.

March: Price sisters, convicted for London car bombings, transferred from English prison to Armagh after hunger-strike.

April: Two pub bombings in Belfast leave seven dead and 75 injured.

July: Rees promises to release all internees before Christmas. Miami showband attacked by UVF – three killed and one seriously injured (two UVF blew themselves up in the attack).

October: A spate of UVF attacks leaves 12 people (including four UVF men) dead and 46 injured: UVF outlawed.

November: Renegade republican group led by Eddie Gallagher and Marian Coyle kidnap Dutch industrialist but are captured after seige in Twenty-six Counties.

Provisionals and Officials in shoot-out in Belfast.

December: Two British soldiers shot in Derry shortly after visit from Harold Wilson.

End of year death toll: 247.

1976

January: in two separate incidents five Catholics killed in sectarian assassinations in South Armagh. The following day 10 Protestant workers killed by 'Republican Action Force' in retaliation at Kingsmills, South Armagh.

SAS unit despatched to South Armagh.

Wilson calls top-level all-party Northern Ireland security meeting at Downing Street.

March: Labour Government withdraws special category status.

Great train robbery at Sallins, Co Kildare for which IRSP members framed – despite Provisionals' claim of responsibility.

April: First prison official killed by Provisionals in Tyrone.

May: Nine IRSP prisoners escape from Long Kesh through tunnel.

July: Three RUC men killed in bomb explosion in Co Fermanagh. RUC reorganised to improve intelligence gathering and operational efficiency.

New British ambassador to Dublin Christopher Ewart-Biggs blown up by remote control land mine.

August: Provisionals detonate bombs in Portrush, Co Antrim.

September: Kieran Nugent begins blanket protest in H-Blocks refusing to wear prison uniform and demanding political status.

October: Provisional Sinn Fein Vice President Maire Drum shot dead in Mater Hospital, Belfast.

December: Provisionals' fire bombs cause £1m damage to Derry shops.

Provisionals declare Christmas cease-fire.

In another twelve months of war, 297 people died.

1977

January: Provisionals carry out booby-trap bomb attack on security forces in Derry.

March: Eight SAS men fined £100 each by a Dublin court for carrying guns without a license after being apprehended south of the border.

May: Loyalist strike demanding tougher repression.

Mason announces the deployment of more SAS units and reinforce-

ments for the RUC and UDR.

July: Feud between Officials and Provisionals in Belfast leads to four deaths.

August: Queen's Jubilee visit marked by Provisional bomb attacks and intensified repression in nationalist areas.

October: IRSP leader Seamus Costello shot dead in Dublin.

December: Provisional leader Seamus Twomey recaptured in Dublin. Five hotels blown up by Provisionals. No Christmas cease-fire. End of year death toll down dramatically to 112.

1978

February: La Mon restaurant bombing in Co Down kills 12 and injures 23 – Provisionals responsible.

March: After systematic harassment H-Block prisoners begin 'dirty protest', coating the walls of their cells with their own excrement – continues until 1981 hunger-strikes.

September: Provisional bomb attack on Eglinton airfield, Co Derry causes extensive damage.

October: Riots in Derry as Sinn Fein commemorates the tenth anniversary of the first major civil rights march and the DUP stages counter-demonstration.

November: Provisionals launch simultaneous bomb attacks on commercial targets in Belfast, Dungannon, Enniskillen, Cookstown, Armagh and Castledearg.

Deputy governor of Belfast Prison shot by Provisionals.

Another wave of fire bomb explosions in 14 towns and villages.

December: Bomb attacks across the Six Counties, three soldiers shot dead in main street Crossmaglen.

1979

March: Airey Neave assassinated by INLA in car bomb at House of Commons.

British ambassador to Netherlands shot dead.

April: Four RUC men killed by Provisional land-mine in South Armagh.

August: Armed Provisional IRA men join Sinn Fein demonstration in West Belfast, to the outrage of Loyalists.

Eighteen British soldiers killed in twin-bomb blasts at Warrenpoint. Lord Mountbatten and three others killed when their boat was blown up on the same day off Sligo.

August: Thatcher visits Six Counties and pledges to smash the IRA – increases RUC by 1000.

October: London and Dublin governments agree to intensify repression and to impose joint security arrangements. National Smash H-Block Committee set up as the prison campaign builds up.

November: A cache of rifles and machine-guns from USA to Provisionals seized in Dublin.

Provisionals carry on campaign against prison staff, killing five in three months.

December: Down bus depot devastated in Provisional attack. Bomb attacks on shops in Lisburn.

Five soldiers killed in two Provisional attacks.

RUC to be boosted by 1000 in 1980.

1980

January: Two soldiers shot by mistake by fellow paratroopers in South Armagh.

Three UDR men killed by land mine in Co Down.

February: Provisional incendiary attack on Belfast bus depot destroys 20 buses.

April: Hotels bombed in Lisburn, Strabane and Armagh. Provisionals' mortar attack on police barracks in Newry.

May: Provisionals bomb cross-border electricity link.

June: Massive IRA bombs in Markethill, Co Armagh and Fintona, Co Fermanagh, destroying commercial premises.

Republican activists John Turnly and Miriam Daly assassinated by Loyalist paramilitaries.

October: Seven republican prisoners go on hunger-strike in the H-Blocks for 'five demands' concerning prison conditions which amount to political status.

December: Hunger-strike called off after 53 days in response to vague promises – which are not fulfilled by the authorities.

1981

January: Bernadette and Michael McAliskey seriously wounded in Loyalist assassination attempt.

March: Second hunger-strike for political status begins under the leadership of Bobby Sands.

April: When MP for Fermanagh-South Tyrone Frank Maguire dies suddenly, Sands is elected to his Westminster seat while still on hunger-strike in the H-Blocks.

May: Sands dies – 100000 attend his funeral.

July: Paisley launches the Third Force – a Loyalist militia to supplement the RUC and UDR.

August: Owen Carron elected to succeed Bobby Sands as MP for Fermanagh-South Tyrone.

October: Hunger-strike ends after 10 deaths: Bobby Sands, Francis Hughes, Ray McCreesh, Patsy O'Hara, Joe McDonnell, Martin Hurson, Kevin Lynch, Kieran Doherty, Tom McElwee, Micky Devine.

November: Provisionals assassinate Loyalist MP Robert Bradford in Belfast.

Series of IRA attacks on Army/UDR/RUC men.

Loyalists mobilise the 'Third Force' and embark on renewed spate of sectarian assassinations.

1982

January: Provisionals assassinate John McKeague, leading Loyalist paramilitary, reputed to be founder of Red Hand Commandos.

February: Wave of arrests and charges of republicans on basis of

information from 'supergrasses'.

IRA scuttle British tramp steamer in Lough Foyle.

March: Five IRA bombs detonated simultaneously in Banbridge, Armagh, Newtown Stewart and Belfast: one person killed.

November: In response to Sinn Fein success in Assembly elections, security forces embark on a binge of shoot-to-kill attacks on unarmed nationalists. Within one week 10 are dead.

December: INLA blows up Army disco in Ballykelly killing 13 soldiers and six civilians.

Political events

1970 January: Split in Sinn Fein follows split in IRA – into Provisionals and Officials.

June: Bernadette Devlin jailed (after appeal) for role in Bogside riots.

Ian Paisley elected MP for North Antrim as Tories win *General Election* at Westminster. In the Six Counties the votes went to the Unionist Party (54 per cent), NILP (13 per cent), Frank McManus' Unity Movement (10 per cent), Ian Paisley (5 per cent), other nationalists (9 per cent). The seats went to the Official Unionists (8), Gerry Fitt, Frank McManus, Bernadette Devlin – and Ian Paisley.

August: SDLP founded.

November: Neil Blaney, Charles Haughey and Captain Kelly brought to trial on charges of conspiracy to provide arms for the republican movement in 1969 – and acquitted.

1971 March: James Chichester-Clark replaced by Brian Faulkner at Stormont.

July: SDLP withdraws from Stormont after wave of nationalist reaction to Army killings in Derry.

September: TUC calls for British government to introduce a Bill of Rights in the Six Counties.

1972 February: William Craig's Vanguard established.

March: Stormont suspended and Direct Rule imposed. William Whitelaw put in charge of the Six Counties.

Massive Loyalist protest rally.

May: Twenty-six Counties vote to join the EEC by a massive majority.

1973 January: The Six Counties joins Britain in the EEC.

February: *General Election*, Twenty-six Counties. Fianna Fail ousted. Fine Gael comes to power under Liam Cosgrave.

June: *Assembly elections* – Official Unionists 29 per cent, other Unionists 32 per cent, SDLP 22 per cent, Alliance 9 per cent, NILP 3 per cent.

November: 'Power-sharing' executive agreed, with the support of OUP leader Faulkner.

1974 January: United Ulster Unionist Council formed, including DUP,

Vanguard, and the anti-Faulkner majority of the OUP. Pledged to bring down the 'power-sharing' assembly. Assembly disrupted by Loyalist members: 18 including Paisley thrown out by police.

February: *General Election* – UUUC (OUP, DUP, Vanguard) 51 per cent, Faulkner Unionists 13 per cent, SDLP 22 per cent, Alliance 3 per cent. Seats: OUP 7, DUP 1, Vanguard 3, SDLP 1.

March: Labour returns to power at Westminster, Merlyn Rees takes over in Six Counties.

April: UUUC calls for return to Stormont.

May: 'Power-sharing' executive formally approved by assembly. Loyalist Ulster Workers Council strike declared immediately: assembly collapses within a fortnight.

October: *General Election* – UUUC 57 per cent, UPNI (Faulkner) 3 per cent, SDLP 22 per cent, Alliance 6 per cent. Seats: OUP 6, DUP 1, Vanguard 3, SDLP 1, Independent (Frank Maguire) 1.

December: Irish Republican Socialist Party formed in split from Official IRA.

1975 **May:** *Convention elections* – UUUC 55 per cent, UPNI 8 per cent, SDLP 24 per cent, Alliance 10 per cent, NILP 1 per cent.

September: William Craig only Unionist in favour of 'power-sharing' with SDLP – leads to split in Vanguard and UUUC.

1976 **August:** Death of three children hit by a car whose driver had been shot by British troops sparks off women's peace campaign, later Peace People.

September: Roy Mason succeeds Merlyn Rees as Secretary of State. TUC launches Better Life for All Campaign – a programme of progressive reforms to be introduced in the Six Counties by the British government.

December: SDLP conference calls on Britain to declare its intention to withdraw.

1977 **June:** Fianna Fail, under Jack Lynch, returns to power in Twenty-six Counties after four years in opposition.

October: Irish Independence Party launched.

November: SDLP conference rejects calls for Britain to withdraw.

1978 **January:** Coalisland conference against repression wins widespread support in the nationalist community.

Fair Employment Agency report discovers that Catholics suffer higher unemployment than Protestants.

European Court of Human Rights rules that internees suffered 'inhuman and degrading' treatment, but not torture.

August: Mason hails breakthrough in investment and job-creation: the DeLorean Motor Company.

November: Labour promises five more seats to Six Counties in return for Unionist support in House of Commons.

SDLP conference declares that British withdrawal is 'desirable and inevitable'.

1979 **March:** Bennett report confirms torture in Castlereagh.

May: *General Election* – OUP 36 per cent, SDLP 18 per cent, Alliance 12 per cent, DUP 10 per cent. Seats (still only 12) OUP 5, DUP 3, SDLP 1 (Gerry Fitt), two independent Unionists James Kilfedder and John Dunlop, and independent nationalist Frank Maguire. The Tories replaced the Labour Party in government and Humphrey Atkins replaced Mason in the Six Counties.

June: *European election* – Ian Paisley (DUP) 30 per cent, John Hume (SDLP) 25 per cent and John Taylor (OUP) 12 per cent were elected to the three places.

First Tory budget cut government spending in the Six Counties by £35 million.

October: British Labour Party conference rejects motion calling for the withdrawal of British troops.

November: SDLP conference calls for a joint approach to the war from London and Dublin.

December: Charles Haughey takes over leadership of Fianna Fail and becomes Twenty-six Counties premier.

1980 **October:** Labour Party conference: Tony Benn denounces the 'crime' of Partition and apologises for his past silence on the Irish issue at a fringe meeting organised by the Labour Committee on Ireland.

1981 **May:** *Local government elections* – OUP (27 per cent), DUP (27 per cent), SDLP (18 per cent), Alliance (9 per cent). Anti-H-Block candidates picked up several council seats.

June: *General Election* in Twenty-six Counties. Fianna Fail ousted in favour of Fine Gael coalition.

Nine H-Block candidates won substantial votes in a number of constituencies. Gained 2.1 per cent of the total votes – 15 per cent in the constituencies contested. Two hunger-striker candidates elected. In Louth, Paddy Agnew won 8368 first-preference votes – over 18 per cent. In Cavan-Monaghan, Kieran Doherty won 9121 first-preference votes – over 15 per cent. Joe Sherlock won the only seat for SFWP in Cork East.

September: Atkins succeeded by James Prior, a more heavyweight figure in the Tory hierarchy.

October: Labour Party conference adopts three-stage Irish policy. In the short-term it upholds Direct Rule, military occupation and the Tory approach towards the hunger-strikes for political status; in the medium future it seeks a British-imposed 'political solution'; and it adopts the goal of Irish unity as its ultimate objective in the indefinite future.

1982 **February:** *General Election* in the Twenty-six Counties – Fianna Fail returned to power under Charles Haughey, but in a minority in the Dail. The Workers Party won three seats: J. Sherlock in Cork East, de Rossa in Dublin North-West and Paddy Gallagher in

Waterford. Sinn Fein fielded nine candidates but none were elected.
June: After consuming around £100m of public money DeLorean finally closes, making 1500 workers redundant. The firm's flamboyant managing director was imprisoned in the USA on cocaine-dealing charges.

October: *Assembly elections.* First-preference votes went to the OUP (30 per cent), DUP (23 per cent), SDLP (19 per cent), Sinn Fein (10 per cent), Alliance (9 per cent).

Labour Party conference condemns plastic bullets but supports the British military occupation of Ireland.

November: Third *General Election* in 18 months, south of the border, returns Garret FitzGerald's Fine Gael to power in a coalition with the Irish Labour Party. The Workers Party fared badly winning only two seats; de Rossa in Dublin North-West and MacGiolla in Dublin West.

British initiatives

1971 **September:** Talks at Chequers involving Tory Prime Minister Edward Heath, Twenty-six Counties Taoiseach Jack Lynch and Stormont premier Brian Faulkner.

November: Harold Wilson unveils 15-year scheme for Irish unity.

1972 **March:** Direct Rule imposed.

September: Three-day Darlington conference attended by OUP, Alliance and SDLP aimed at finding political solution. A failure.

October: British government discussion paper published asserting the permanence of Partition and the integrity of the 'United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland' but recognising an 'Irish dimension' in the affairs of the Six Counties.

November: Heath visits Six Counties.

1973 **March:** Border poll. Boycotted by the nationalist population. It confirmed what the Six County state was specially designed to ensure – majority support for Partition.

White paper proposes an assembly elected by proportional representation to administer the Six Counties, while 'law and order' remains under Westminster control.

July: Assembly convened – Official Unionists 24 seats, other Unionists 26 seats, SDLP 19 seats, Alliance 8, NILP 1.

November: Agreement on 'power-sharing' executive including 7 Official Unionists (led by Faulkner), 6 SDLP and 1 Alliance.

December: Sunningdale conference attended by London and Dublin governments and by Faulkner's Unionist faction, the SDLP and the Alliance. Aimed to push forward the 'power-sharing' assembly and executive and a council of Ireland, in recognition of 'the Irish dimension'.

1974 **January:** Opposition to the assembly coordinated by the United Ulster Unionist Council (DUP, Vanguard, OUP majority).

May: 'Power-sharing' assembly brought down by Loyalist Ulster Workers Council strike.

July: British government White Paper announces the establishment of a 'constitutional convention' to pursue a political settlement.

1975 **March:** Labour Prime Minister Harold Wilson announces convention elections on 1 May during visit to Stormont.

May: Convention elected and convened: seats – UUC 47, UPNI 5, SDLP 17, Alliance 8, NILP 1.

September: All Unionists in convention except William Craig in favour of return to Stormont and no concessions to the nationalist community. Stalemate.

1976 **February:** Convention re-called in an attempt to secure agreement on 'power-sharing'. Inter-party SDLP-UUUC talks break down after one hour.

March: Convention collapses in chaos.

December: Fair Employment Act – outlawing discrimination in employment practices – introduced.

1977 **May:** Mason begins new round of talks with political parties.
November: Mason suggests a Stormont assembly without legislative powers to run local departments.

1978 **August:** *The Daily Mirror* calls for the withdrawal of British troops from the Six Counties.

September: Mason and Tory spokesman Airey Neave simultaneously condemn calls for a British withdrawal.

1979 **September:** Pope John Paul appeals for peace at Drogheda – Provisionals call for British withdrawal.

October: New Northern Ireland Minister Humphrey Atkins invited OUP, DUP, SDLP and Alliance to a conference to discuss another political settlement. Only the SDLP and Alliance accept.

1980 **January:** Atkins' devolution conference opens – and closes after rows between SDLP and DUP.

February: Atkins' devolution conference re-opens – and is deadlocked by DUP 'no-surrender' declaration.

April: Atkins in Dublin talks.

November: After dragging out for almost a year, Atkins finally gives up the pretence and sets about the serious business of crushing the protest in the prisons.

1981 **November:** Anglo-Irish Council agreed between British Prime Minister Thatcher and Irish Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald. The scheme was to involve elected politicians from London, Dublin and Belfast to discuss anything except the war in the Six Counties. It is still ticking over, very quietly.

1982 **January:** Prior announces 'rolling devolution', a scheme for gradually increasing local autonomy through a 'power-sharing' assembly.

April: Prior pushes his devolution proposals through Parliament in face of stiff opposition from right-wing Tories but with the assis-

tance of the Labour Party.

October: *Assembly elections.*

The number of seats won by the different parties was OUP 26, DUP 21, SDLP 14, Alliance 10, Sinn Fein 5, independent Unionists 2. Both Sinn Fein and SDLP campaigned on the understanding that they would not take their seats in the Assembly.

December: Prior addresses new assembly: announces increased numbers for RUC.

The bombing campaign in Britain

1972 **February:** *Aldershot:* Official IRA bomb at Parachute Regiment barracks, in reprisal for Bloody Sunday killings in Derry, leaves seven dead – including chaplain and women cleaners.

1973 **March;** *London:* two Provisional car bombings outside Old Bailey and Scotland Yard – one man killed, 180 injured.

August: *Midlands:* nine blasts in three week period, police bomb disposal expert killed.

London: series of small incendiary and booby-trap bombs in big stores, stations, the Stock Exchange; 20 injured.

September: *London:* Chelsea bomb injures five.

1974 **January:** *London:* explosions at Madame Tussaud's wax museum and the boat show at Earls Court.

February: *M62:* coach carrying British military personnel blown up by parcel bomb; 12 people killed including nine soldiers.

June: *London:* Bomb explodes at Westminster.

July: *London:* bomb at Tower of London kills one woman and injures 40 children.

October: *Guildford:* Two pubs frequented by soldiers bombed, killing four military personnel and one civilian and injuring about fifty others.

November: *Woolwich:* Soldiers' pub bombed – two killed, 35 injured.

Coventry: Birmingham-based republican blows himself up while planting a bomb outside telephone exchange.

Birmingham: Two pubs blown up killing 12 people and injuring 180. Provisionals deny responsibility.

December: *London:* Bomb attack on Prime Minister's private flat in Belgravia; he is out.

Several bombs in central London, as well as at Bath, Bristol and Aldershot.

1975 **January:** *London and Manchester:* Six bombs – 26 injured.

Autumn: *London:* Sustained bombing and shooting campaign culminates in Balcombe Street seige in which four Provisionals are captured. Car bombs and attacks on West End hotels and restaurants leave five dead, including a bomb disposal expert and Professor Hamilton Fairley, killed accidentally by a bomb attached to the

car of Tory MP Hugh Fraser. After he offered a reward for information leading to the arrest of republicans, notorious reactionary Ross McWhirter was himself assassinated.

1976 **April:** *London:* Bomb explodes on Tube train.

Explosion at Ideal Homes Exhibition injures 80.

1977 **January:** *London:* Eight bomb explosions.

1978 **December:** *London:* Three car bombs – and seven explosions in five other British cities.

1979 **January:** *London:* Two car bombs and a failed attempt to blow up a gas storage tank at Greenwich and an oil refinery plant at Canvey Island.

March: *London:* Airey Neave assassinated by INLA car bomb at House of Commons.

1980 **March:** *Salisbury plain:* INLA bomb attack on Army base – several injured.

1981 **October:** *London:* Coach full of soldiers hit by massive nail bomb outside Chelsea barracks: two civilians killed and many soldiers injured.

Retired Army officer Sir Steuart Pringle severely injured by car bomb at his Dulwich home.

Police bomb disposal expert killed by explosion at Wimpy Bar, Oxford Street.

November: *London:* Home of Attorney General blasted by IRA bomb.

Booby-trap bomb triggered by dog at Woolwich Arsenal, injuring two soldiers' wives.

December: *London:* Attempted bombing of gas storage tank, East London.

1982 **July:** *London:* 11 soldiers and some horses killed by bombs in Regents Park and Park Lane.

4. Irish political prisoners in English jails

The following prisoners are recognised by the Sinn Fein (Britain) POW Department. Readers are encouraged to send birthday cards on the dates indicated and to attend the regular pickets of the prisons organised by Sinn Fein.

Name	Town/County	Sentence	Prison	Birthday
William Armstrong	Belfast	Life	Parkhurst	26/12
Jimmy Ashe	Dublin	12yrs	Albany	31/7
Liam Baker	Belfast	20yrs	Gartree	6/12
James Bennett	Belfast	20yrs	Albany	4/12
Stephen Blake	Donegal	15yrs	Albany	31/10
Martin Brady	Belfast	Life	Long Lartin	22/9
Eddie Butler	Limerick	Life	Leicester	17/4
Eddie Byrne	Down	14yrs	Parkhurst	2/5
Robert Campbell	Belfast	10yrs	Parkhurst	1/7
Anthony Clarke	Belfast	14yrs	Albany	11/2
Martin Coughlan	Dublin	14yrs	Hull	4/11
Anthony Cunningham	Belfast	10yrs	Long Lartin	1/6
Gerry Cunningham	Tyrone	20yrs	Long Lartin	24/3
Robert Cunningham	Tyrone	20yrs	Long Lartin	12/7
Hugh Doherty	Donegal	Life	Parkhurst	7/12
Vincent Donnelly	Tyrone	Life	Parkhurst	25/9
Brendan Dowd	Kerry	Life	Leicester	17/11
Joe Duffy	Dublin	12yrs	Albany	19/1
Harry Duggan	Clare	Life	Parkhurst	31/10
Kevin Dunphy	Kilkenny	12½yrs	Wormwood Scrubs	
Noel Gibson	Laois	Life	Wormwood Scrubs	11/12
Ann Gillespie	Donegal	14yrs	Durham	7/6
Eileen Gillespie	Donegal	14yrs	Durham	17/7
Richard Glenholmes	Belfast	10yrs	Hull	19/9
Patrick Guilfoyle	Tipperary	14yrs	Gartree	31/3
Patrick Hackett	Tipperary	20yrs	Parkhurst	28/4
Sean Hayes	Dublin	20yrs	Gartree	18/11
Paul Holmes	Belfast	Life	Long Lartin	22/6
Sean Kinsella	Monaghan	Life	Gartree	5/11
Brian Keenan	Belfast	21yrs	Leicester	17/7
Bernard McCafferty	Belfast	16yrs	Parkhurst	
Ronnie McCartney	Belfast	Life	Albany	3/9
Con McFadden	Meath	20yrs	Long Lartin	19/6
William McLaron	Belfast	15yrs	Long Lartin	13/12
Raymond McLoughlin	Donegal	12yrs	Albany	8/8

Name	Town/County	Sentence	Prison	Birthday
Gerard McLoughlin	Derry	4yrs	Maidstone	13/4
John McCluskey	Fermanagh	10yrs	Hull	12/3
Andy Mulryan	Dublin	20yrs	Long Lartin	18/11
Patrick Mulryan	Dublin	20yrs	Long Lartin	23/3
James Murphy	Belfast	10yrs	Long Lartin	8/1
Michael Murray	Dublin	12yrs	Hull	5/10
Stephen Nordone	Louth	Life	Hull	2/8
Paul Norney	Belfast	Life	Wormwood Scrubs	11/11
Joe O'Connell	Clare	Life	Parkhurst	15/5
Shane O'Doherty	Derry	Life	Gartree	25/1
Eddie O'Neill	Tyrone	20yrs	Hull	15/1
Michael Reilly	Belfast	10yrs	Wakefield	4/8
Gerard Small	Belfast	12yrs	Wakefield	
Peter Toal	Belfast	10yrs	Long Lartin	1/4
Roy Walsh	Belfast	Life	Albany	1/11
Gerry Young	Belfast	14yrs	Long Lartin	27/2

Addresses of prisons in England where Irish POWs are held:

H. M. Prison Parkhurst, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO 30 5NX.

H. M. Prison Albany, Newport, Isle of Wight.

H. M. Prison Wormwood Scrubs, P. O. Box 757, London W1Z OAE

H. M. Prison Long Lartin, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcs, WR11 5TZ.

H. M. Prison Gartree, Leicester Road, Market Harborough, Leics, LE16 7RP.

H. M. Prison, Welford Road, Leicester, LE2 7AJ.

H. M. Prison, Love Lane, Wakefield, Yorkshire, WF2 9AG.

H. M. Prison, Hedon Road, Hull, Humberside, HU9 5LS

H. M. Prison, Old Elvet, Durham, DH1 3HU.

H. M. Prison, County Road, Maidstone, Kent.

The following Irish political prisoners have consistently proclaimed that they are not guilty of the charges on which they have been convicted. They have been framed on the basis of forced confessions and bogus forensic tests and despite strong contradictory evidence.

In connection with the Guildford and Woolwich pub bombings:

Pat Armstrong	Life	Wakefield
Gerry Conlon	Life	Parkhurst
Paul Hill	Life	Parkhurst
Carole Richardson	Indefinite	Durham
Anne Maguire	14 years	Durham
Pat Maguire	14 years	Wakefield
Sean Smyth	12 years	Albany

In connection with the Birmingham pub bombings:

William Power	Life	Wormwood Scrubs
Hugh Callaghan	Life	Albany
Noel McIlkenny	Life	Wormwood Scrubs
Patrick Hill	Life	Long Lartin
John Walker	Life	Long Lartin
Robert Hunter	Life	Long Lartin

5. Britain's machine of terror

In 1969 the Six Counties state was sustained by a body of around 10000 armed men. This was bad enough for the nationalist population, but since the war began the repressive apparatus has mushroomed. At first British soldiers were in the front line of the war. In 1972 – the worst year yet for deaths and casualties – their numbers passed 20000. Subsequently the Army forces have been steadily reduced, and the indigenous Loyalist forces built up. The Royal Ulster Constabulary is a paramilitary police force; the Ulster Defence Regiment is the former 'B' Specials incorporated into the British Army. Their combined numbers now far exceed those of the British Army. The total strength of the security forces is now almost three times the level of 1969 – and these are just the official statistics.

	RUC	RUC Reserve	B Specials	UDR	Combined Ulster forces	British Army	Total
1969	3044		8100		11144		11144
1970	3809	625		3869	8303	8100	16403
1972	4256	1909		9102	15267	20300	35567
1974	4563	3860		7900	16323	16000	32323
1976	5255	4697		7800	17752	14900	32652
1978	5789	4689		8010	18488	13400	32978
1980	6935	4752		7500	19187	12100	31287
1982	7500	4900		7150	19550	12500	32050

6. Death toll in the Irish War

The following list was drawn up by Father Raymond Murray of Armagh in response to the inadequate and prejudiced statistics produced by the British government. No doubt Father Murray has his own prejudices, but his breakdown of the fatalities of the Irish War provides a much more accurate picture than the statements of the British authorities. The list covers the 13 year period from 1 August 1969 to 19 August 1982; it excludes those killed in the Twenty-six Counties and in Britain. From *The Irish Times*, 3 September 1982.

Innocent people killed by British forces	108
Deaths by rubber and plastic bullets	14
Republicans killed by British forces	83
Republicans killed on hunger-strike	10
Catholics killed by Loyalist paramilitaries	510
British forces killed by republicans	616
Assassinations by republicans	328
Civilians killed as a result of republican bombs, crossfire, accidents	194
Civilians killed by Loyalist bombs, crossfire, accidents	123
British forces killed by Loyalists	13
Loyalists killed by British forces	14
Protestants killed by Catholics in early riots	12
Catholics killed by Protestants in early riots	34
Republicans killed by premature explosions, etc.	96
Loyalists killed by premature explosions, etc.	26
People killed in uncertain circumstances	31
TOTAL	2212

7. Information on Ireland — selected bibliography

For a long time people in Britain have suffered from a basic ignorance of the issues raised by the Irish War. To some extent this is due to a degree of indifference to the subject. But it is also the case that much of the material available on Ireland is biased, shallow and out of date. There has also been a considerable degree of misinformation fed to the British public. Our selected bibliography is designed for anti-imperialists who want to get a clear grasp of the Irish War.

British anti-imperialists have to make a special effort to keep informed. Government reports and statistics are often difficult to obtain. Some reports, like those of the Fair Employment Agency, are suppressed. Detentions under the PTA usually go unreported. Trade union bodies are often complicit in this campaign of silence. The TUC never publicises the cases of trade union members who have been harassed or detained in connection with the Irish War. Much research remains to be done on particular aspects of imperialist domination, for example, the role of particular companies, of the main political parties and the collaboration of the unions.

Given the dearth of information, we have to rely primarily on establishment sources. Of the Fleet Street dailies, *The Guardian*, and the *Financial Times* are the most useful. Although both papers are selective in their coverage of Ireland, *The Guardian* carries stories on the war and repression, while the *Financial Times* is particularly useful for keeping abreast of British strategy. For more regular and detailed coverage *The Irish Times*, published in Dublin, but widely available in Britain, is the paper to read. The *Irish Post*, a weekly published in London often has useful information on the Irish community in Britain. British Sinn Fein puts out *POW: bulletin of the Irish Political Prisoners in Britain*.

An Phoblacht/Republican News, the republican movement's well-produced weekly, carries regular information on the war and is indispensable for understanding the republican point of view. *The Starry Plough*, gives the viewpoint of the Irish Republican Socialist Party. Two magazines published in Ireland often contain articles of interest. *Magill*, a Dublin-based monthly contains useful investigative articles, particularly on the Twenty-six Counties. *Fortnight*, a Belfast magazine broadly sympathetic to the SDLP, publishes a wide spectrum of Irish opinion. A flavour of Loyalist reaction can be obtained from the Democratic Unionist Party's monthly publication, the *Protestant Telegraph*.

Many left-wing publications in Britain deal with the Irish War. The best all-round anti-imperialist analysis can be found in *the next step*, the monthly review of the Revolutionary Communist Party. The views of the Labour Party-influenced left can be found in *Troops Out*, the occasional bulletin of the Troops Out Movement.

Research

Anti-imperialists embarking on research or seeking more specialised information on Ireland should consult the following texts.

M D Shannon: *Modern Ireland*, Greenwood Press 1981.

A bibliography available in large reference libraries.

R Deutsch, V Magowan: *Northern Ireland: A chronology of events*, three volumes, Blackstaff Press, Belfast 1974.

A useful work on the early stages of the war.

W D Flackes: *Northern Ireland: A political directory 1968-1979*, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin 1980.

A useful who's who of politics in the Six Counties.

General histories of Ireland

The new reader should begin with one of the standard histories of Ireland. Unfortunately most of them are written in a turgid and often diffuse style. The treatment of the post-Partition period is particularly unsatisfactory and tends to suffer from pro-British and anti-republican prejudices. There is no single book that can be wholeheartedly recommended. F S L Lyons' *Ireland since the famine* is reasonably accessible and more than covers the material contained in other texts. We have included the two standard left-wing texts – those of T A Jackson and Desmond Greaves. They provide a useful background to the war and if you can't get your hands on Lyons read one of them. Robert Kee's *The Green Flag*, popularised by his recent television series, provides a superficial assessment of British domination over Ireland from a liberal point of view.

C D Greaves: *The Irish crisis*, Lawrence and Wishart, London 1972.

T A Jackson: *Ireland her own*, Cobbet Press, London 1946.

R Kee: *The green flag*, three volumes, Quartet Books, London 1979.

F S L Lyons: *Ireland since the famine*, Weidenfield and Nicolson, London 1971.

Radical analysis

In recent years a number of left-wing academics have published books on Ireland. Many of these authors claim to be Marxists. Unfortunately this new school of writing is characterised by a Fabian rather than a Marxist point of view. They share a number of common themes. They all fail to see the relationship between the class struggle and the struggle for national liberation. As a result of their economism they are all profoundly hostile to the national liberation struggle. They are particularly preoccupied with the Loyalist working class, which they see as more progressive than the nationalist community. Their central focus is the elusive unity of classes, which they counterpose to the anti-imperialist struggle. Many disdain the concept of imperialism and argue that Britain can no longer be identified as the oppressor that it has often been made out to be. Instead they prefer to use the language of

the media and write of 'sectarian' and 'religious' conflict. Although these texts are extremely tedious and are single-minded about making the obvious complex and obscure, anti-imperialists should familiarise themselves with at least one of the texts. Their views must be combatted because they present a pro-imperialist apologia as something progressive.

T Nairn: *The break up of Britain*, New Left Books, London 1976.

Although this book is not strictly about Ireland, the author, a member of the *New Left Review* editorial board, provides the framework of analysis for this radical pro-imperialist trend. Nairn argues that 'imperialism in the sense required by the theory does not operate in any part of the Irish island'.

P Bew, P Gibbon and H Patterson, individually and in collaboration, have produced the most sophisticated versions of the anti-republican radical theory. Their work is well researched and provides a coherent argument that remains influential on the British left.

P Gibbon: 'Some basic problems of the contemporary situation', *Socialist Register*, 1977.

Gibbon argues that imperialism is not an issue in Ireland.

P Bew, P Gibbon, H Patterson: *The state in Northern Ireland*, Manchester University Press, Manchester 1979.

The text provides the basic analysis for the radical anti-nationalist thesis.

H Patterson: *Class conflict and sectarianism*, Blackstaff Press, Belfast 1981.

This study of Loyalist workers in the pre-Partition period attempts to discover the positive side of Orange ideology. Patterson believes that Loyalist populism can become a dynamic class force.

The authors' political approach is revealed most clearly in their joint article 'Some aspects of nationalism and socialism in Ireland: 1968-78' in A Morgan and B Purdie (eds): *Ireland: divided nation, divided class*, Ink Links, London 1980. In this article Bew *et al* call for 'the construction of a progressive alliance to reform the state and create the best possible conditions for the development of the class struggle'. This call for the reform of Stormont is not peculiar to Bew and his collaborators. Probably the most degenerate attempt to argue this line is B Probert: *Beyond Orange and Green*, Zed Press, London 1978. Probert, too, believes that imperialism is an illusion. She is convinced that Paisley's rabidly pro-imperialist and bitterly sectarian DUP 'is fundamentally a working class movement'.

For a Marxist critique of the above approach see A Clarkson, P Murphy: 'The Loyalist working class' in *Revolutionary Communist Papers* No 7, July 1981. James Connolly's writings offer a refreshing antidote to the pretensions of radical theory. See particularly his book, *Socialism and Nationalism*. Finally Marx's writings on 'the Irish Question' are collected in *Marx on Ireland*, Lawrence and Wishart – after more than a century it still makes compelling reading.

Studies of the Irish War

We have selected the best and most informative accounts of the Irish War. Because many of the books listed are pro-British and anti-Irish, the reader must use care in distilling information from these texts.

A Boyd: *Holy war in Belfast*: Grove Press, New York 1969.

Useful background to the war.

K Boyle, Hadden, Hillyard: *Ten years on in Northern Ireland*, Cobben Trust, London 1980.

Good material on legal repression.

F Burton: *The politics of legitimacy*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London 1978.

Useful material on the use of the law in the Six Counties.

T P Coogan: *On the blanket: The H-Block story*, Ward River Press, Dublin 1980.

Background information on the H-Block struggle.

M Farrell: *Northern Ireland: The Orange state*, Pluto Press, London 1980.

Written by a leading civil rights activist, the book provides a sympathetic account of the struggle against the sectarian state.

R Fisk: *The point of no return*, Andre Deutsch, London 1974.

An excellent bourgeois account of the 1974 Ulster Workers Council strike.

J Holland: *Too long a sacrifice*, Dodd, Mead and Co., New York 1981.

This relatively unknown book, written from a liberal point of view, is highly recommended. It gives a flavour of life in the Six Counties and a journalistic account of the impact of the war on the people of Belfast. Whilst its analysis is shoddy its account of the Loyalist paramilitaries is good.

K Kelley: *The longest war: Northern Ireland and the IRA*, Zed Press, London 1982.

An up to date account of the war, written from a radical left point of view. The author is sympathetic to the cause of Irish liberation and provides a useful summary of the main events during the last 13 years. Unfortunately the analysis is marred by the radical left prejudice which reduces anti-imperialism to 'broad front politics'; he is critical of the armed struggle and finds bombing campaigns in Britain incomprehensible. Nevertheless worth reading.

N McCafferty: *The Armagh women*, Co-op Books, Dublin 1981.

The fight of republican women prisoners of war for political rights.

J McGuffin: *Internment*, Anvil Books, Tralee Co Kerry 1975.

A useful assessment of an important phase of imperialist strategy.

E McCann: *War and an Irish town*, Penguin, London 1974.

A good account of the early phase of the conflict in Derry by a radical journalist and civil rights activist.

O'Dowd, Rolston, Tomlinson: *Northern Ireland: Between civil rights and civil war*, CSE Books, London 1980.

A good example of how British socialists evade choosing sides in the war.

Sunday Times Insight Team: *Ulster*, Penguin, Harmondsworth 1972.

An example of fine investigative journalism. Shows that bourgeois journalists often come closer to the truth than left-wing academics. Recommended.

Studies on repression

Despite consistent attempts to cover up imperialism's dirty work, the scale of British repression can be gleaned from a number of government reports.

Bennett Report: *Report of the committee of enquiry into police interrogation procedures in Northern Ireland*, London 1974.

An inquiry into police torture which is a landmark in judicial cynicism. Reading between the lines – Bennett found cases 'in which injuries, whatever their precise cause were not self-inflicted' – the discerning reader will find plenty of evidence of police terror.

Diplock Report: *Report of the commission to consider legal procedures to deal with terrorist activities in Northern Ireland*, London 1972.

Able assisted by former TUC general secretary George Woodcock, Diplock provided the legal framework for the policy of 'criminalisation'. The report is a monument to legalistic double-talk and shows how the legal system can be modified at any time to suit the purposes of the British ruling class.

Widgery Report: *Report of the tribunal appointed to enquire into the events of Sunday, 30 January 1972 which led to the loss of life in connection with the procession in Londonderry on that day*, London 1972.

The report on the callous murder of 14 unarmed civilians in Derry on Bloody Sunday 1972. It illustrates that if you kill a Catholic you're only doing your 'duty'.

Pro-imperialist accounts of repression mark a sharp contrast with the evasions of government reports. They are uninhibitedly behind Britain's war and make no apologies for it. The British left can learn a lot from their ruthless and single-minded pursuit of their objectives.

A F N Clarke: *Contact*, Secker and Warburg, London 1983.

This account of a former officer in the Third Battalion of the Parachute Regiment provides a vivid portrayal of the Army's role. It shows the war in its full ferocity and is far from reluctant to describe the repression that the Army metes out to Irish people. Read it and lend it to a friend who is in or around the Labour Party.

T Geraghty: *The story of the Special Air Services 1950-1980*, Arms and Armour Press, London 1980.

A celebration of the SAS – provides useful insights into the SAS's disgusting role in Armagh.

Republicanism

Most studies of the nationalist movement tend to be anti-republican. Some claim a degree of sympathy with the objectives of the republican movement, while criticising the armed struggle. Of the works listed here Bowyer Bell's is the most thorough. If read carefully, it can provide a useful guide to the evolution of the republican movement.

J Bowyer Bell: *The secret army: A history of the IRA, 1916-79*, Academy Press, Dublin 1979.

T P Coogan: *The IRA*, Fontana Books, London 1980.

There are a number of interesting recollections written by IRA activists.

S MacStiofain: *Memoirs of a revolutionary*, Gordon Cremonesi, Dublin 1973.

E O'Malley: *The singing flame*, Anvil Books, Dublin 1978.

The Loyalist paramilitaries

Most accounts of the Loyalist paramilitaries tend to emphasise the sensational dimension of their activities. The books listed here may provide the reader with a few insights into the subject.

D Boulton: *The UVF 1966-73*, Gill and MacMillan, Dublin 1973.

Concentrates on the early history of Loyalist paramilitarism. The last chapter suggests that Loyalist workers are about to move in a progressive direction. In fact the paramilitaries embarked on the biggest sectarian assassination campaign in modern history.

M Dillon and D Lehane: *Political murder in Northern Ireland*, Penguin, Harmondsworth 1973.

A tedious account of sectarian murders during 1972 and 1973. Useful on the 1973 power struggle inside the UDA.

Silent Too Long, Belfast 1982.

A very good pamphlet produced by relatives of victims of imperialist repression, includes detailed case studies of Loyalist murders.

The Irish working class

Books on the Irish working class are few and far between. Most published works on this subject are long out of date. There is virtually nothing of value written on the Twenty-six Counties. The books selected here are useful for understanding the historical evolution of the Irish working class.

A Boyd: *The rise of the Irish trade unions*, Anvil, Dublin 1976.

A garbled reformist account.

J D Clarkson: *Labour and nationalism in Ireland*, New York 1925.

Highly recommended.

E P Beresford: *A history of the Irish working class*, Gollancz, London 1972.

Good historical background.

C McCarthy: *Trade unionism in Ireland 1894-1960*, Dublin 1977.

A thorough academic industrial relations approach.

Imperialism, its strategy and the British working class

British anti-imperialists need a thorough grasp of what makes the British state tick, where the main political parties stand and the collaboration of the official labour movement with the war effort. There are very few books that reveal the motive force behind British strategy. However, the following three books provide a useful historical approach to the subject.

D G Boyce: *Englishmen and Irish troubles*, London 1972.

G Dangerfield: *The damnable question*, London 1979.

An academic study of the 'Irish Question' in British politics around the time of Partition.

E Strauss: *Irish nationalism and British democracy*, London 1957.

This text is essential reading for all anti-imperialists. It provides a very good background for understanding anti-Irish prejudice in Britain. Long out of print, you'll have to order it through your public library.

There are a number of books available on the role of the Labour Party and the TUC in mobilising for British solutions for Ireland. We would recommend the following texts.

Mary Masters: 'Workers against imperialism: the British labour movement and Ireland', *Revolutionary Communist Pamphlets*, London 1979.

A survey of the anti-imperialist traditions of the British working class and their suppression.

Lenin: *British labour and British imperialism*.

The foundations of the collaboration of labour with imperialism.

Studies of the Labour Party's policy on Ireland tend to be superficial. The most up to date account is G Bell: *Troublesome business*, Pluto Press, London 1982. Bell argues that since 1981 the Labour Party has become more sympathetic to the cause of Irish unity. Despite its utopian analysis, Bell's book provides useful material on the consistent anti-Irish policies of the Labour Party. Some typically cynical explanations are contained in the accounts of the top Labour Party politicians.

J Callaghan: *A house divided*, Collins, London 1973.

R Crossman: *The diaries of a cabinet minister, Volume 3*, Hamillan and Cape, London 1971.

H Wilson: *The Labour Government 1964-70*, Weidenfield and Nicolson, London 1971.

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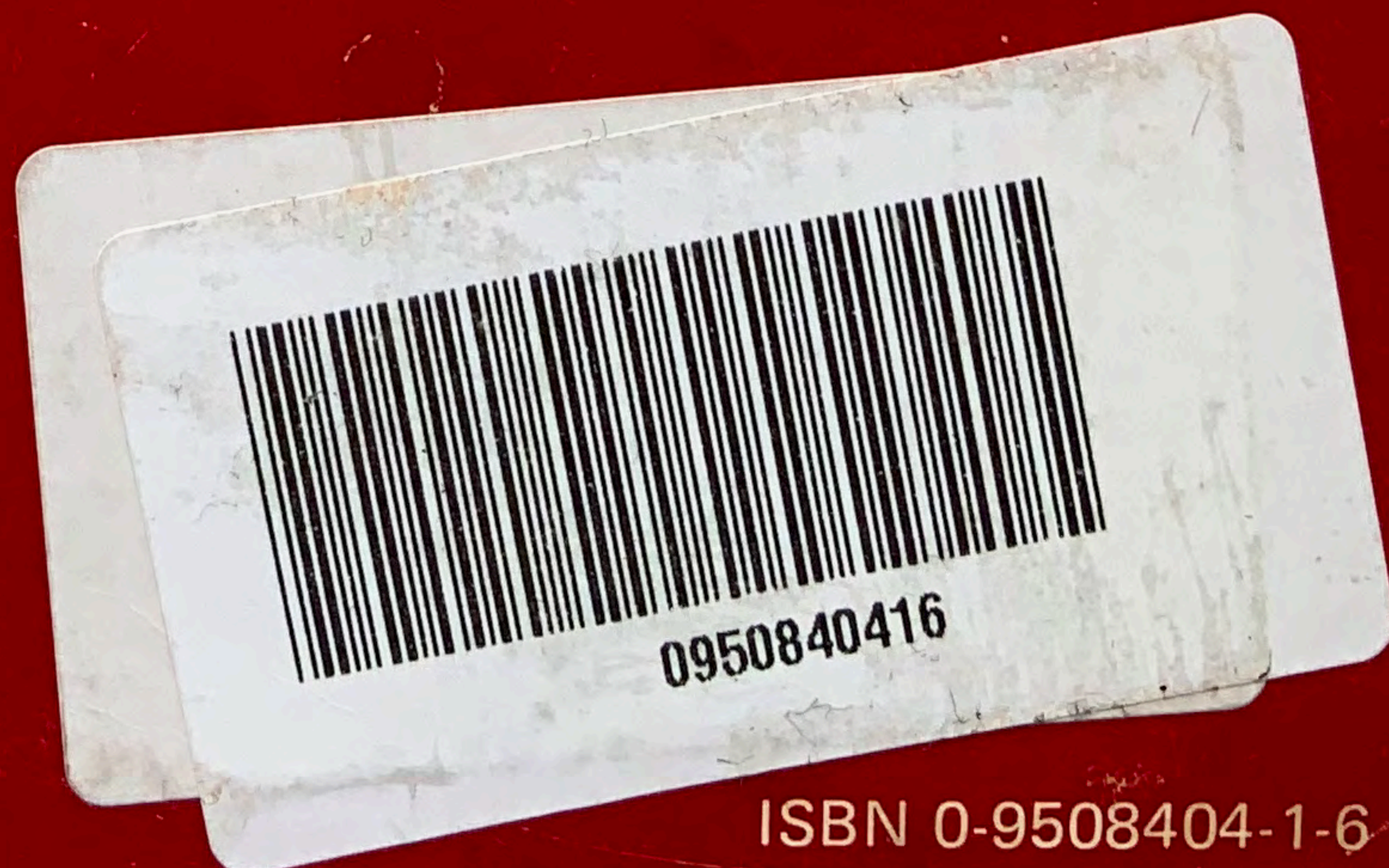
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