

Irish Freedom ^{75p}

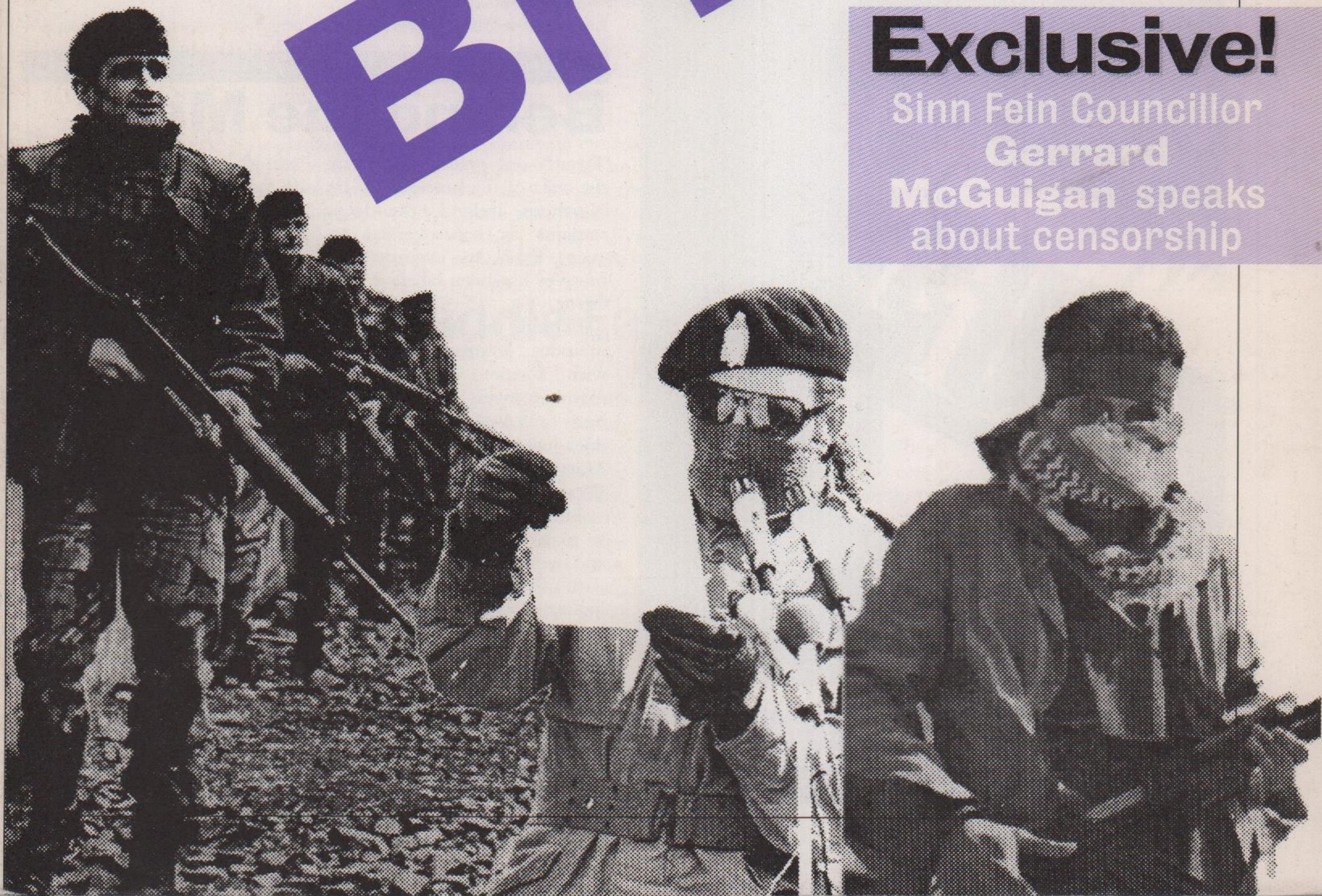
Bulletin of the Irish Freedom Movement No12/November-December 1990

On Ireland and the Middle East
Take sides
against

Britain

Exclusive!

Sinn Fein Councillor
Gerrard
McGuigan speaks
about censorship





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Win the propaganda war

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the
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WAR**
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would have become involved in politics. They would have lived normal lives. Unless an attempt is made to understand their motivations how can anybody understand the problem and work towards solving it?'

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Whose side are you on?



When Margaret Thatcher described the current IRA campaign against British targets like Sir Peter Terry, the former governor of Gibraltar, as 'guerrilla warfare', it was the first true word about the Irish struggle to come out of a government minister's mouth for over 20 years. Not surprisingly the press and numerous politicians vociferously insisted that Thatcher's phrase was a slip of the tongue. The shooting of the former governor of Gibraltar who presided over the cold blooded murder of three unarmed IRA volunteers in March 1988 was immediately branded as the work of psychopathic blood-thirsty gangsters.

For more than two decades the British media and British politicians have presented the conflict in Ireland as a problem of law and order. They have painted IRA attacks as the product of a criminal conspiracy involving a handful of psychopathic gunmen who kill indiscriminately.

The truth of the matter and the one *Irish Freedom* has consistently argued, is that the IRA is a guerrilla army engaged in a national liberation struggle. Like any other liberation movement elsewhere in the world, it has widespread support within its community. British propaganda cannot disguise the reality of Sinn Fein regularly winning a third of all nationalist votes in elections in Northern Ireland. British rule in Ireland, on the other hand, has little in common with 'law and order'. The gunning down of republicans Michael McCaughey and Des Grew by an SAS deathsquad starkly reveals the British state at war: British 'law and order' in Ireland means that it is acceptable to gun down someone the authorities claim had a 'police record'.

It is this reality which the British

establishment and their press have consistently attempted to disguise. They have presented the war in Ireland as a criminal conspiracy which threatens everyone in Britain.

Many of those in Britain who support the struggle in Ireland have underestimated the importance of this offensive. The success of the criminalisation strategy has helped shield Britain from the destabilising effects of the Irish War and has undermined the attempts to build a solidarity movement in this country. This is why the press and politicians were so quick to excuse Thatcher's remarks as a 'slip of the tongue'.

Once it is admitted that the IRA are engaged in a war then the issue is no longer a question of 'law and order', but of taking sides in a colonial war. This is not a question the British ruling class want raised. They know instinctively that it is by no means a foregone conclusion that ordinary people will spontaneously support the government. Keeping this question off the domestic political agenda has been the hallmark of British strategy throughout the last 21 years of the war.

It was no surprise then that the most outspoken condemnations of the IRA as common criminals came from Roy Hattersley and other Labour Party politicians. They are so desperate to prove to the establishment that they are as capable as the Tories of covering up the truth about Ireland and maintaining the domestic consensus behind the state. The louder they and the press screeched, the more obvious the cracks in the propaganda wall became.

The Irish Freedom Movement welcomes Thatcher's admission for she

unwittingly placed the question of taking sides in the conflict on the agenda. This has little to do with moralism or a pacifist wish to see an end to violence. The Irish War remains of critical importance in British politics: the struggle for Irish unity and freedom strikes at the very heart of the British state. It remains the most forceful challenge to the ruling class today. The British working class has every interest in supporting this challenge to the state. After all the state that denies Irish freedom is the same state that is attacking living standards and civil liberties in Britain itself.

The ruling class knows this and, more importantly, knows that maintaining working class support for their war aims in Ireland remains crucial to their control over society. They know that if the majority of people in Britain support what they are doing in Ireland, they can never mount a challenge when they are in the firing line themselves.

Our message is that we have more in common with Irish men and women fighting a war for freedom, than we have with the toffs in the British establishment. This is why Thatcher's statement is so important for us. We have always challenged Britain's propaganda machine in our bid to expose the real criminals in Ireland and the common interest that exists between working people both sides of the Irish Sea. Any chink in their carefully constructed wall of lies is to be welcomed. We, like the establishment, know that any real debate about Ireland can only weaken the authorities and strengthen us. That is why we say ordinary people have to take sides in the war and start campaigning for British troops out now!

Hands off the Middle East

The IFM stands with the people of the Middle East against any Western, particularly British, intervention in the Gulf. For supporters of Irish freedom the idea of Britain going to war as the defender of the right of small nations to self-determination is particularly hilarious. After conducting a brutal and bloody war for over 21 years precisely to prevent Irish self-determination, this hypocrisy and cynicism is breathtaking.

The US deployment Saudi Arabia and Britain's slavish backing of these actions have little to do with defending Kuwait or opposing Saddam Hussein. On the contrary, the reason they have taken this action against a man they trained, supported and armed for many years to do their dirty work against Iran, is to militarise international relations as a way of boosting their positions in the face of their economic decline.

These are not peripheral points to make to people concerned about Ireland. They have many and profound consequences for Irish solidarity work in Britain. The militarisation of global politics means that the question of imperialism and anti-imperialism is now on the political agenda. In this climate supporters of Irish freedom can raise the question of Ireland with a new audience who have never heard the arguments for Irish

freedom. The question remains: 'who's side are you on?'

The IFM has participated in setting up, alongside other anti-imperialist organisations, an ad hoc Hands off the Middle East Committee (see page 8 for a report on the demonstrations we helped organise). Through this work we hope to build an anti-imperialist current in Britain which remains critical for the future development of an Irish solidarity movement.



Marching for

On Saturday 11 August more than 3000 people joined the IFM's national annual demonstration through north London demanding 'Troops out of Ireland' and 'Prisoners out of jail'. The march was loud, militant and tightly organised, showing that it is still possible, even in today's political climate, to organise an impressive display of active and determined opposition to Britain's rule in Ireland.

The demonstration was led by two republican flute bands: the Spirit of Freedom, from Derry, and the Crossmaglen Patriots from Scotland. Demonstrators marched from Islington town hall to a rally in Whittington Park. There was an impressive array of trade union and student union banners on the march. Irish and Turkish solidarity organisations and people from all over Britain joined the demonstration. Throughout, a constant barrage of slogans greeted the hundreds of bystanders and brought traffic to a standstill.

Despite the menacing presence of police, the well-organised and highly visible IFM stewards ensured there was little trouble or disruption. Only four arrests took place—and these before the march began.

Irish freedom

Phil Murphy, national organiser of the IFM, reminded everyone that it was '21 years since British troops came out onto the streets of Northern Ireland in their tin helmets.... They were sent there for one reason only: to try to prop up British rule in another country. They said they would come out in a week. It shows how true the statement is that a week is a long time in politics. Britain's one week has lasted for 21 years.'



SU HODGE

Conrad, an ex-British squaddie who was on active service in Northern Ireland, drew loud applause when he told the rally that he had 'seen the Irish War from both sides of the barbed wire. In 1977 I wasn't invited...you know you're not wanted when six-year-olds spit at you in the street. I was there as part of Her Majesty's terror squads.... I now realise that the British state is our common enemy. The freedom fighters of Derry and Belfast are not our enemy.... They should be an inspiration to the British working class.'

SU HODGE



Fiona Foster, a leading member of the Irish Freedom Movement, warned the British government that the IFM was committed to work relentlessly to explode the establishment's lies and silence on the Irish War: 'Every time they ban a film on Ireland, we'll get a copy and show it around the country. Every time they arrest an Irish republican and label him a terrorist, we'll be on the streets telling ordinary people he's a freedom fighter and who the real terrorists are in Ireland. Every time they shoot to kill, we'll be outside Downing Street to call them murderers. Wherever and whenever they lie, cheat and remain silent, we'll be there to put the case for Irish freedom.'



SIMON NORFOLK

Marching for

John Fitzpatrick, a well-known trade union activist in Hammersmith Nalgo, began by welcoming the demonstrators' determination and resolve on the day:

'It is important that we do not underestimate the significance of this event. Every time we stand our ground it is a grim reminder to the British ruling class that in Ireland and in Britain they will never win. We have come here to pay our respects to the freedom fighters of the past, and also to celebrate the fact that the longest-ever fight against British rule is still going strong. We have seen a new depth of British lies and sick-



SU HODGE

ening hypocrisy about the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Saddam Hussein, it should be remembered, got the whole gameplan from the British: invade a country, set up a puppet government, then inform the whole world that the troubles are about religious differences.... British imperialism is still in Ireland and still on the warpath in the Gulf.' Fitzpatrick's parting words drew loud applause: 'When British workers decide to support the struggle for Irish self-determination, they'll be saying where they stand in Britain. They'll be saying "your bloody Union Jack is not our flag".'



JOE BOATMAN

The IFM takes to the streets of London

On Saturday 4 August, a week before the national demonstration, the IFM staged a lively and colourful motorcade through the streets of north London.

The motorcade was fronted by a 17-foot flat bed lorry specially decked out with banners and posters. A powerful public address system, mounted on the back of the lorry, blasted out the IFM's message to thousands of shoppers: 'Take sides in the Irish War! Take to the streets and demonstrate next week!'

At various shopping centres along the route, the 30-strong IFM 'hit-squad' would disembark and 'swamp' the

streets joining IFM supporters already holding street meetings. Thousands of leaflets were distributed while hundreds of copies of *Irish Freedom* were sold.

The motorcade was a great success. The following week we discovered that many people who marched in north London came as a result of seeing us the week before. It illustrated to many sceptical sympathisers that there were people around who were willing to take to the streets to popularise the struggle for Irish freedom. London has not seen the last of the IFM motorcade machine!

Kieran Anderson



JOE BOATMAN

Irish freedom

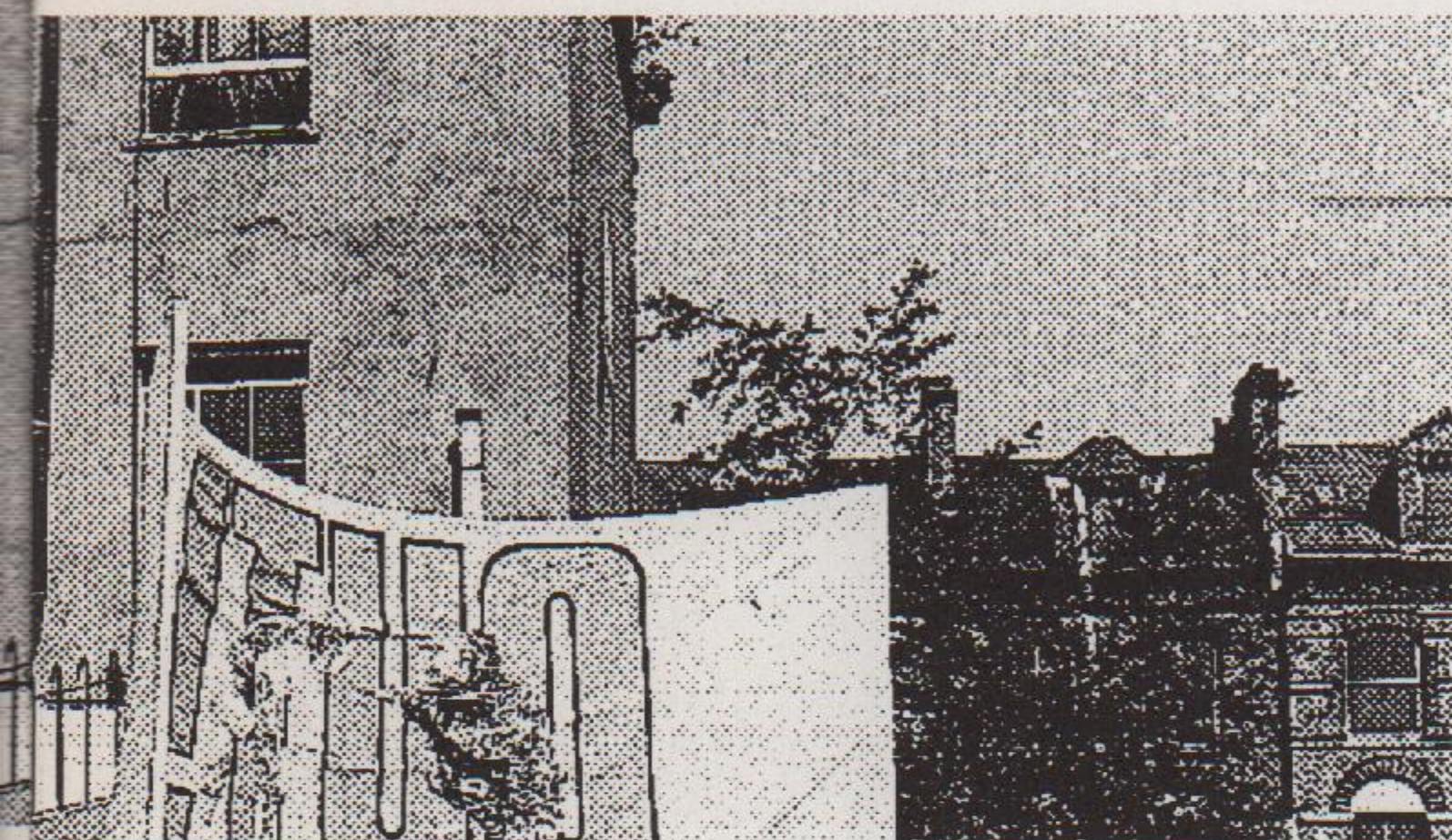
Gerard McGuigan, Sinn Fein councillor from Ardoyne, summed up the rally by taking us back to internment without trial. McGuigan, who himself was interned, explained how 19 years ago British troops raided thousands of homes, dragged men out of their beds and subjected them to mental and physical abuse. It was this kind of action by the British which dashed the hopes of those who saw the civil rights movement as the means of securing peace, freedom and justice:

'Unfortunately, the British Army gave their answer—with batons and rubber

bullets. You cannot reform a corrupt system. You must tear it down. It was the British Army who forced Irish people into armed conflict. The responsibility lies with the British government to get their troops out of Ireland.'

McGuigan ended by saluting the demonstrators for 'coming on this march to be counted in support of the republican struggle'.

Compiled by Andrew Calcutt and Fiona Foster





The IFM contingent on the torchlit march through London on Wednesday 10 October showing solidarity with the people of the Middle East

On Saturday 8 September and Wednesday 10 October, the Ad Hoc Hands Off the Middle East Committee called demonstrations demanding that Western governments keep their murderous hands off Iraq and get their war machines out of the Gulf.

Hands off the Middle East demonstration

The Irish Freedom Movement went on the demonstrations to show Westminster that we oppose Britain's war plans, not just in Ireland, but right across the globe. As in Ireland, British imperialism has a long, brutal history of interference and oppression in the Middle East.

The 3000-strong national march in September was joined by a number of

solidarity groups and anti-imperialist organisations. The IFM contingent on the torchlit march on the October demonstration (picture above) was a powerful display of solidarity with the people of the Middle East. As the Gulf crisis looks set to intensify, the IFM will again be making sure that the British state doesn't get away with its barbarism anywhere.

Justin Ford

Thatcher lets the cat out of the bag!

On Monday 24 September, the IFM held a picket of Downing Street—in agreement with a statement made by Margaret Thatcher.

Strange indeed, but true. For, a few days before the picket, the prime minister had uttered the first true word by a British politician in the past 21 years on Ireland: she admitted that the IRA were engaged in a guerrilla war!

Together with other anti-imperialist groups, we went down to Downing Street to declare our support for the other side in the war. We demanded an immediate end

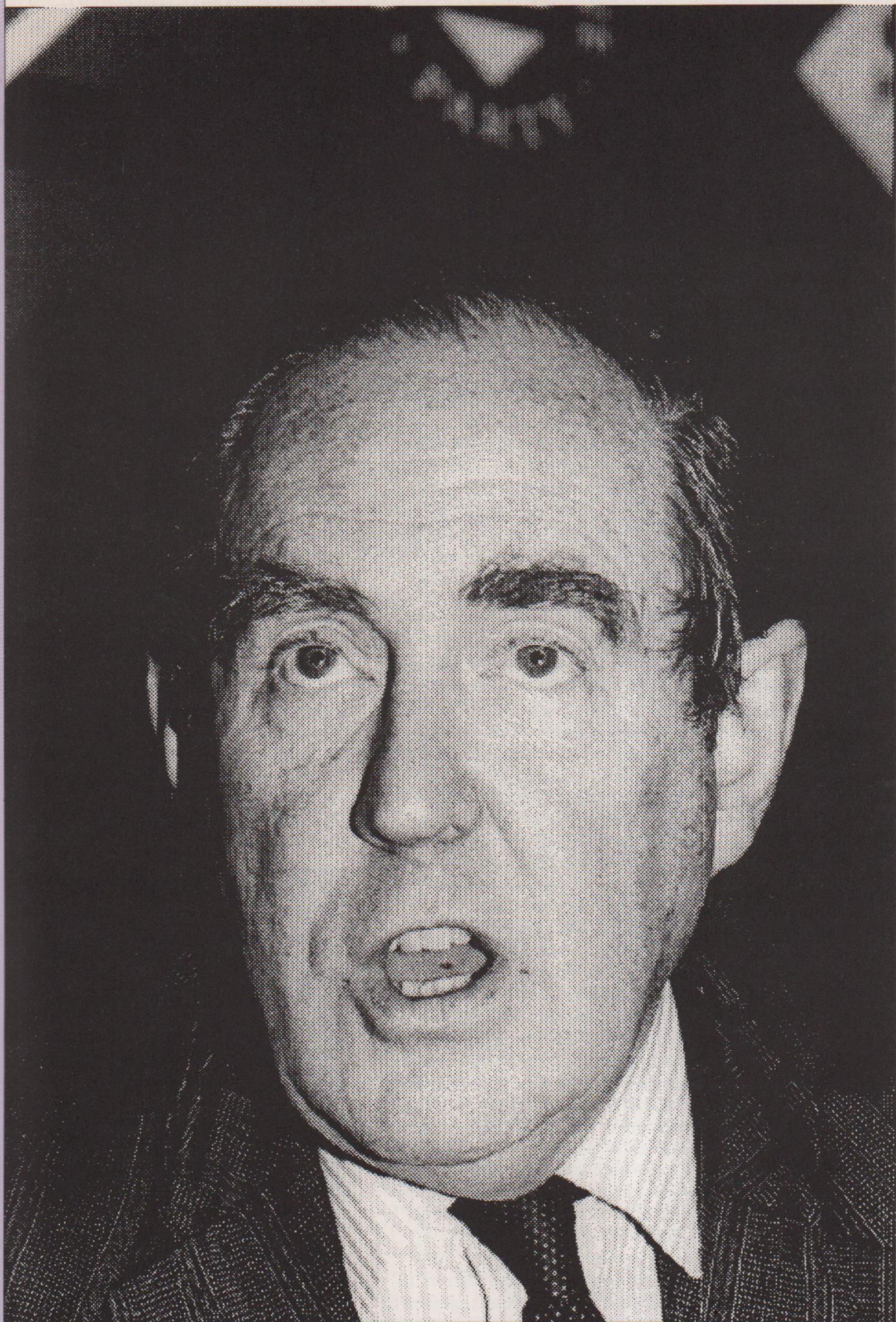
to Britain's military occupation of Ireland and openly declared our desire to see a British defeat. Margaret Thatcher didn't come to greet us. But there was no doubt that she and her cohorts in the media got the message. The IFM will continue to pounce on any instance where their carefully constructed propaganda wall cracks and a glimpse of the truth breaks through.

Justin Ford

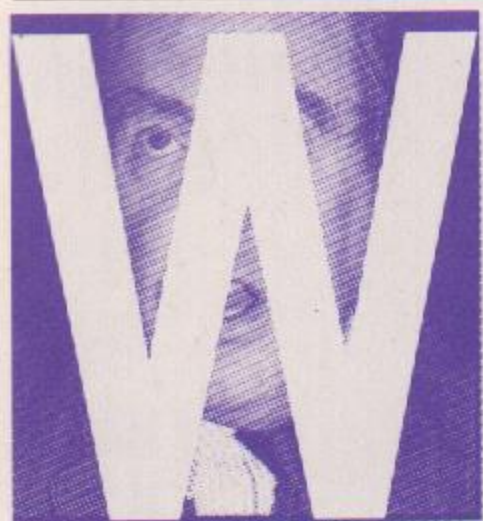
From South Africa to Eastern Europe negotiations, compromise and peace have become commonplace.

Denis Ryan examines whether Britain's 'peace' initiative—the Brooke talks—will achieve anything in Ireland.

9



The carrot with the stick



hen Peter Brooke was appointed Northern Ireland secretary in July 1989, few commentators felt he had the capacity to make

an impact on anything, let alone on the deadlock of the Irish political scene. By July this year, though, only the possibility of war in the Middle East pushed Brooke's initiatives out of the media limelight. The image of bumbling Brooke has been replaced by one of the patient, tenacious diplomat who, despite all the odds, was making headway in dealing with the bigoted suspicions of Loyalist politicians, the 'please-talk-to-us' whining of Haughey and his Dublin clique and the plastic sincerity of John Hume and the Social and Democratic Labour Party in the North. The end result of Brooke's endeavours, if we are to believe the media hype, amounts to an historic breakthrough. Let us look at this in some detail.

There is now the possibility of bringing Loyalists and moderate nationalists in the form of the SDLP together with Dublin and London to talk about the possibility of having talks about some form of power-sharing and devolved government in Northern Ireland. So much for the hype. In reality Brooke is no closer to achieving this today than he was 15 months ago: by July of this year, the talks were deadlocked. The Loyalists' main objection to talks was the existence of the hated Anglo-Irish agreement, forced on them by Margaret Thatcher in 1985. Dublin sulked over its suspension from the initial talks in 1989. Then in early 1990 Dublin agreed to suspend the Anglo-Irish agreement if it was included, from the beginning, in any discussions about what was to replace it.

Maryfield

Dublin, however, placed one condition on its participation in the talks: it insisted upon maintaining the Maryfield Secretariat, that part of the Anglo-Irish agreement which allows civil servants from Dublin to

meet with their counterparts in Northern Ireland. This proved too much for Ian Paisley and James Molyneaux, leaders of the Unionist parties. They demanded the suspension of the Maryfield Secretariat and claimed that Dublin had no right to be involved in new talks as these would be about matters internal to Northern Ireland and Britain. For Paisley, the idea of sitting down at a table with the Irish government to discuss Northern Ireland's internal affairs was both politically and emotionally repellent.

It was in this 'promising' political climate that the issue was put on ice as parliament went into its summer recess. As the Middle East crisis focused attention away from Ireland it seemed likely that Brooke would let his pet project die a noble but silent death. What has been surprising in the recent period has been the fact that the initiative has once again been talked up in the press. So what is going on?

Reality

The reality of Britain's rule in Ireland is that Britain has nothing to offer as a political solution—all it can achieve is an alteration to the forms of its domination. This is where Brooke's initiative has significance.

Implementing any political change in the Six Counties depends upon the balance of class forces. Brooke's efforts are part of an ongoing strategy to alter decisively the balance of forces between the British state and its chief protagonist—the republican movement. Since the hunger-strikes of 1981 which saw open and massive public support for the republican movement, the British state has attempted to claw back lost ground. A combination of political manoeuvring and ruthless repression has characterised British strategy ever since. Brooke's initiative should be seen as the latest element in the Anglo-Irish agreement which was consciously designed to strengthen constitutional nationalism at the expense of the republican movement.

Brooke's continual attempts to bring the different sides together to

talk has helped to sustain the idea that the British government is attempting to offer a progressive solution to the Irish conflict. This has allowed the state to maintain its propaganda offensive and argue that the 'violence', 'tribalism' and 'religious bigotry' of the Irish people, not British imperialism, are the barriers to progress. The idea of a beleaguered British state caught up in the conflict helps distract attention from the realities of the war.

A good example of this was the Stevens report into the collusion between the security forces and the paramilitaries which had led to the deaths of many ordinary nationalists. The report concluded that such collusion existed but that it was neither widespread nor institutionalised. Earlier investigations had shown that the exact opposite was true. But the report, coming as it did in the midst of the media frenzy about Brooke's initiatives, was completely passed over. It is worth recalling that the Anglo-Irish agreement of 1985 made great play of reforming the RUC and UDR. In the heady media storm whipped up by the Brooke initiative, the Stevens report covers up their collusion with paramilitaries in killing innocent nationalists.

The main purpose behind the Brooke talks is the attempt to use them to isolate Sinn Féin and the



republican movement. This became very clear during a press briefing in Belfast to mark his first 100 days in office. Brooke made what appeared to be a radical departure from established government policy when he suggested that 'the government might—at some time in the future and in certain conditions—talk to Sinn Fein'. He went on to say that while the violence can be contained, the IRA cannot be beaten militarily: 'If peace is to be restored, it will require a decision on the part of the terrorists that the game is not worth the candle.' (*Observer*, 5 November 1989) These statements caused a predictable outcry from Loyalist and British politicians alike. They were designed to do precisely that. It all added up to an impression that the British government was prepared to do the unthinkable and talk to the IRA. What better ploy could there be to give Brooke's initiative some credibility among the nationalist people? Anything that provoked such hostility from Loyalist and Tory MPs strengthened the notion that there was something new on offer here.

Wedge

Brooke's statement implied that anything was possible but only if Sinn Fein and the IRA were prepared to stop the violence and get involved in the political process. The aim was not to sit down and

negotiate with the IRA. On the contrary, the aim was to drive a wedge between wider sections of the nationalist community (and republican sympathisers in Britain and the USA) and the IRA and Sinn Fein. While Brooke made 'overtures', Thatcher contemptuously dismissed the IRA

SIMON NORFOLK



Brooke aims to split the IRA and isolate Sinn Fein

as 'common murderers' and Douglas Hurd explained the need to 'extirpate the terrorists' (*The Independent*, 4 November 1989).

It should be understood that this was not simply a 'ploy'. Brooke and the government would dearly love to get the republican movement to accept a ceasefire. The effects of the ceasefire in 1975 were devastating. Gerry Adams admitted that it was the closest that the British ever came to destroying the republican movement. Whether through a ceasefire or by the steady marginalisation of the republican movement, the British government aims to introduce political measures which could strengthen its position at the expense of the republican movement.

Brooke's strategy is part of the carrot and the stick approach perfected by British imperialism over the years. Over the last two years, for example, the British state has been pumping millions of pounds into nationalist areas to build shopping arcades and sports complexes. Late last year a £65m investment package was announced for Derry. Britain wants to give the impression that it is improving the quality of life for nationalists and thus wean them away from supporting the IRA. The Catholic Church has been given responsibility for dispensing some of these millions. Any group that wishes to gain access to these funds must first

show that they have no connection with Sinn Fein or the IRA. No guesses as to what happens if these connections are found: the funding is refused or cut off as the case may be.

In September this year Glór Na nGael, a group teaching Irish to infants, had its funding of £80 000 cut off without warning. It was accused of being a front for terrorists. No evidence was ever produced to substantiate the claim nor was anybody ever charged. The message was clear: if you want money you have to accept British rule.

Isolation and compromise

Brooke is attempting a dual strategy of isolating the republican movement and creating pressures which might lead towards some form of compromise. Like every Northern Ireland secretary before him, Brooke knows that the IRA cannot be defeated militarily. Ever since 1971, Britain's policy has been one of containment. What is new in today's conditions is the attempt to contain the struggle at a level where a 'new political initiative' stands some chance of success. Isolating the republican movement is the precondition for this.

The Brooke initiative is consistent with past British strategies because underlying the entire process is Britain's military and repressive machinery which is always poised to strike when appropriate. What is new is the accumulated effect of 21 long and brutal years of war in a period where anti-imperialist struggles internationally are more isolated than at any time this century. Everything the British government does today, and the Brooke initiative attests to this fact, hinges on the one thing it has always felt confident about—domestic consensus and support for what it is doing in Ireland. At a time when the pivot of British strategy hinges upon isolating the republican movement, the task for anti-imperialists in Britain to win broader support for the just struggle of the Irish people has never been more urgent or important.





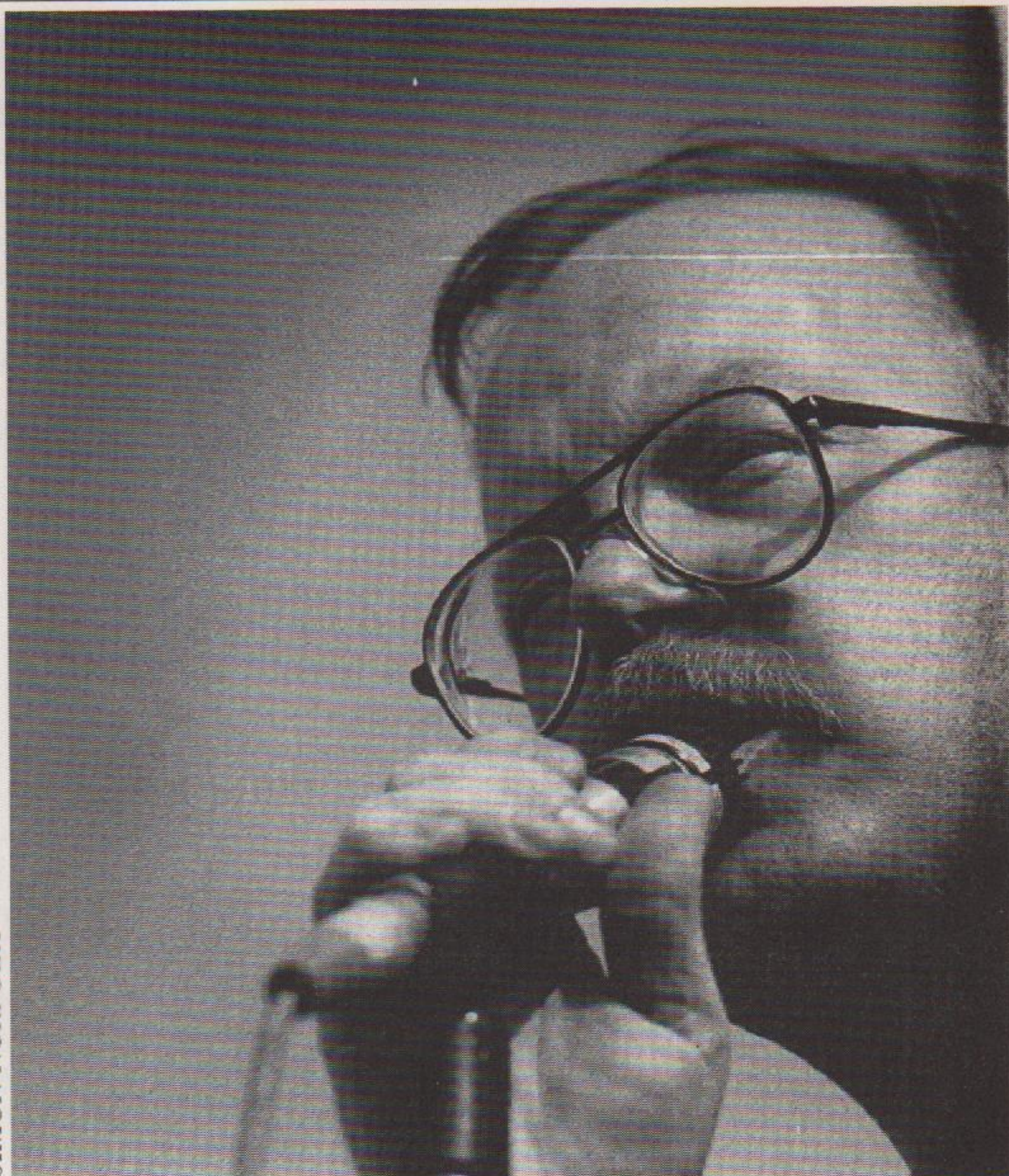
Irish Freedom exclusive

Beating British censorship on Ireland!

On 19 October the Tory broadcasting ban on Sinn Fein will have been in place for two years.

Fiona Foster spoke to **Gerard McGuigan**, Sinn Fein councillor from Ardoyne, about censorship, violence and the British revolution.

SIMON NORFOLK



Fiona Foster: *It's two years now since Douglas Hurd banned your party from the airwaves. Has the ban had any real impact on Sinn Fein?*

Gerard McGuigan: Yes, especially in the rural areas where Sinn Fein are not seen on a daily basis operating on the ground. People are now starting to be influenced by the establishment presentation of the war. The ban was an attack on the civil rights of ourselves and our supporters. Our voices are now deemed less important than those of other elected politicians.

Fiona Foster: *Why do you think the British saw such a draconian ban was necessary?*

Gerard McGuigan: I really believe Sinn Fein were having a positive effect on people. We were exposing the truth. We were causing major embarrassment to the British establishment, the Southern establishment and the Catholic hierarchy who are all part and parcel of the same thing—they're all desperate to sustain the status quo.

Fiona Foster: *The broadcasting ban was one of a series of measures brought in to make things harder for Sinn Fein electorally wasn't it?*

Gerard McGuigan: Yes. Ever since Sinn Fein's early election successes the British government have introduced legislation before every election to hamper Sinn Fein. After the hunger-striker Bobby Sands was elected to Westminster in 1981 they introduced legislation to ban all prisoners from contesting elections. Then they introduced new forms of identification that most young nationalist voters wouldn't have. They then tried to stop us standing as local councillors by demanding that we sign an anti-violence oath—which I had no trouble signing because I'm anti-violence and Sinn Fein's policy is to remove the source of the violence in Ireland, namely the British Army, the courts, prisons, etc.

Fiona Foster: *You mention violence. What is your view*

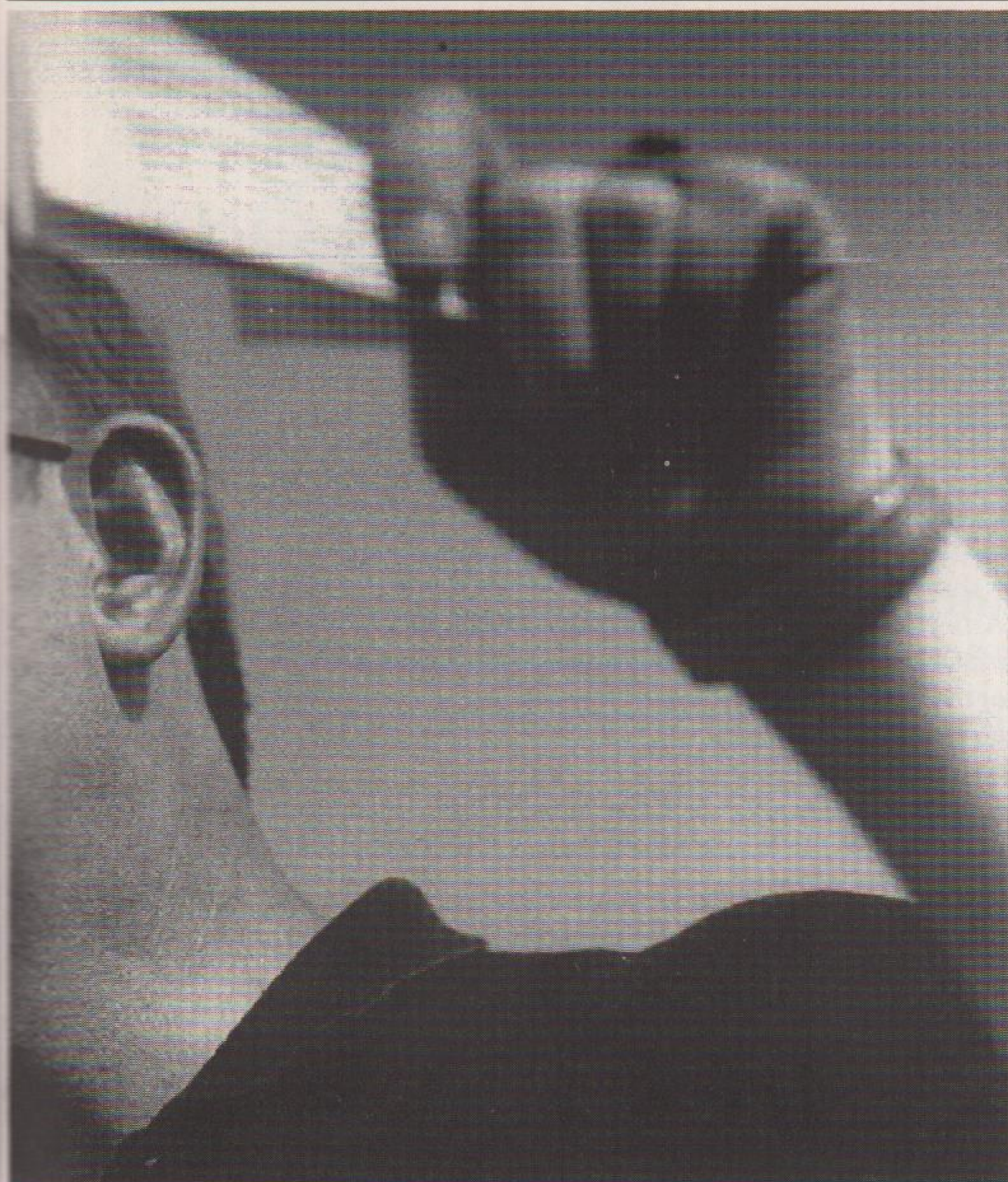
of the recent IRA bombing campaign in Britain?

Gerard McGuigan: Well I'll put like this. Members of the British establishment will no longer walk into the Carlton Club and order their brandy and cigars and discuss the latest share prices on the stock market. They'll walk in watching their back and discuss whether those security cameras are working and whose briefcase got searched. That bomb has brought the Irish War to the forefront of their thinking. By making the headlines across Europe and in Britain the IRA have focused media and political attention on the Irish question. Anyone who looks at Downing Street today can see it's become an armed camp with gates, steel shutters, armed police and all the rest—so the message is getting through to Thatcher. People can only live like that for so long without cracking.

Fiona Foster: *How would you answer those people who say that they support getting*

the troops out but can't condone the killings?

Gerard McGuigan: I know that my freedom, and freedom for my family and community, calls for sacrifice. There are countless young Irish people lying in cemeteries all over the country, countless more lying in prison cells all over the world. So the suffering and sacrifice is not all one-sided. There is no such thing as a war without victims, and some will be innocent victims. Look at the Middle East. I'm sure many innocent people will die if there is a war between Saddam Hussein and the West. The weapons that Thatcher and Bush are sending there are designed to kill. We saw how far Bush is prepared to go in Panama—the 1000 civilian deaths there barely got a mention. When Thatcher helped the US in their air raid on Libya there were thousands of innocent people killed and maimed. That's terrorism on a world scale—terrorism with the most



sophisticated of weapons. What the IRA are doing is penny ha'penny compared to that.

Fiona Foster: *It's always frustrated IFM activists that so many British left-wing people are prepared to support the struggle of the ANC but not the IRA's. What would you say to them?*

Gerard McGuigan: I think it's up to people on the left in Britain who have no problem supporting the ANC, the Sandinistas and any other liberation struggles, but who repeatedly turn a blind eye to Ireland, to start examining why they have no commitment to achieving peace and justice on their own doorstep. It's not a million miles away, it's not South Africa or South America, it's next door and the injustices are going on in Britain's name. So the British left have a duty to examine what they can do. If that means getting out on the street and working with groups that have already given the Irish War a high

profile then they should do that.

Fiona Foster: *Before and during the current IRA bombing campaign in Britain, journalists and media commentators have desperately tried to hype up the Brooke talks [the negotiations between northern Ireland secretary Peter Brooke and the Unionists, the SDLP and the Irish government to achieve a new constitutional arrangement in the Six Counties] and suggest that they are the way towards a peaceful conclusion to the Irish War. What's your view of the talks and how have they been viewed by ordinary nationalists in the Six Counties?*

Gerard McGuigan: To most people back home the talks are a joke, because nobody involved has challenged the central issue—the force that creates the violence—the British presence. The Brooke talks are about establishing another form of internal government that Britain controls. The Northern Irish state is a failed

entity in every respect. There has never been a time when Britain could establish a form of government there which could command the support of the population as a whole. The only talks I would welcome would be talks about British withdrawal.

It's funny Britain can harp on about democracy in every other country in the world but when it comes to Ireland they have refused to listen to the democratic wishes of the majority of people in Ireland. Until they adopt a policy of withdrawal and allow self-determination in Ireland they're going to face rebellion.

Fiona Foster: *In the IFM we have discussed the Brooke talks in the context of the Anglo-Irish agreement and Britain's long-term strategy of marginalising and stemming the electoral rise of Sinn Fein. Five years on how do Sinn Fein view the success or otherwise of Britain's latest 'political solution'?*

Gerard McGuigan: Well, it has had some success in bolstering the Social and Democratic Labour Party outside the inner-city areas. But on the whole none of the promises made on the launch of the agreement have been kept. Far from it bringing peace, stability and reconciliation, we've had the opposite—harassment, death-squads, Loyalist coat-trailing processions through nationalist areas, are all on the increase. I'll give you an example. The Orange Order are still allowed to hold their processions in areas like Portadown—a 100 per cent nationalist area—with the British Army and the RUC to protect them. But when nationalists asked for permission to walk through the most deserted part of the British Isles on a Sunday—Belfast city centre—they were refused. So nothing's changed. We're still subject to the jack-boot of Loyalism and in inner-city areas like Belfast Sinn Fein's vote has actually increased.

Fiona Foster: *At least until the Iraq crisis blew up, opinion polls showed that the Labour Party could be heading for a victory in the next general election. Do you think that Irish nationalists could expect anything from a Labour government?*

Gerard McGuigan: I think there are some very good socialists in the Labour Party. But over the past few years the left has been squeezed out of the party and many socialists would now find joining Labour an obnoxious prospect. Unfortunately, I don't see any changes if Labour gets into power. What history has shown is that Labour is as guilty of repression in Ireland as are the Tories. They fully endorsed torture in Castle-reagh. They masterminded Ulsterisation and normalisation. They masterminded the H-Blocks. Their record is shameful. So, you can see, I have no confidence in a future Labour administration.

Fiona Foster: *The IFM think that ordinary people in this country have nothing to lose and everything to gain by taking sides with the Irish against Britain. What do you think?*

Gerard McGuigan: Well it's often been said that the key to the British revolution lies in Ireland. I think that if the left gets organised it could take advantage of the successful conclusion of the Irish struggle. It would show that ordinary people can change things. It would show that though the establishment has cloaked itself in mystery and mystique behind this is a bunch of bumbling idiots who, to put it crudely, have fucked up Ireland and Britain. I think things have changed, especially since the miners' strike where ordinary people saw the police and the state for what they really are. The mask slipped. I think more and more British people are now questioning things. The potential is there.

Lorraine Roberts reports from Belfast on a series of court cases which make Joseph Stalin's showtrials of the thirties look like exemplary expressions of truth, neutrality and justice.

The Casement Park show trials

On Saturday 19 March 1988, people from all over the world turned out to show their respects to the victims of a vicious sectarian murder. A few days earlier, a lone Loyalist gunman Michael Stone had attacked with guns and grenades mourners attending the funeral of the Gibraltar Three. While Michael Stone's murderous activities received worldwide coverage, what has happened since has been ignored.

That Saturday two British Army corporals were killed after they drove into the funeral cortege as it passed Casement Park, down Andersonstown Road. Having suffered attack a few days before, the mourners acted as one to protect themselves from what they feared was another murderous sectarian assault.

Since the funeral, 22 people have been convicted for defending both the living and the dead in Andersonstown that day. Like the apartheid regime which was widely condemned in Britain for passing death sentences on blacks 'guilty of association' during the uprisings in which collaborators were violently killed, British courts have passed jail sentences ranging from five to 25 years on those whose only crime was to be in the vicinity of Casement Park that day. The remaining five awaiting trial know the outcome is a foregone conclusion.

The trials of those accused have been nothing more than acts of revenge against an entire community. The trials have been a catalogue of lies, uncorroborated and unreliable evidence. A witness known as 'Witness E', who was described by Justice Murray as 'talkative, argumentative and thoroughly unreliable', was the sole source of conviction of one man who received a 15-year sentence. So 'unreliable' was this man that his evidence went on to convict a further five accused.

But what about the hi-tech evidence? Remember that? At the start of the trials a lot was made of this. Pictures of hundreds of RUC men carrying TV monitors and videos into the court portrayed an image of indelible evidence. One waited for the announcement that Britain

had satellite photos of the accused. However, from all accounts, the 'heli-teli' used must have been of the same level of quality as the one the Americans used in Iraq which couldn't spot an army of 100 000 men preparing to invade Kuwait. During the main case, the judge admitted that the quality of the film was poor and 'features could not be made out'. Furthermore, only four out of 200 RUC men could identify any men from these films—and their identifications were primarily based upon the men's clothing!

As in the case of the Guildford Four or Birmingham Six, this was no miscarriage of justice. There was never any intention of providing 'justice'. The absence of evidence was never going to stop the British state from getting what it wanted. In response to these blatant frame-ups a Casement Accused Relatives Committee was formed to highlight what has happened and to demand the release of all those imprisoned as a result of the showtrials. The committee is planning an international campaign. One of their spokesmen spelt out their determination to me:

'We believe our relatives were arrested and convicted as an act of revenge by the British state against the people of Belfast. Anywhere else in the world, in the aftermath of the Gibraltar funerals...the courageous actions of these men on the day would have been applauded.'

It is precisely 'the courageous actions of these men' which have forced the British state to act as it has. What 'these men', whom we applaud, showed to the world was the fact that Britain is at war with an entire community—the nationalist population of Northern Ireland who refuse to accept the colonial occupation of their country. The British state has shown, once again, that there are no lengths to which it will not go to maintain its rule in Ireland.

If you are interested in supporting this campaign contact:

*Jim Kelly
51 Rockville Street, Belfast
Phone 248153*

Ex-British squaddie changes sides

Conrad spoke to 'Irish Freedom' about his experiences as a British squaddie, his three tours of duty in Northern Ireland, and why he changed sides.

'Like most people I have made mistakes and joining the Army was the biggest. After leaving school and sampling 33 jobs I found out that British society was not very favourable to a big black youth with an "attitude problem". So the Army sounded like a good option to me.

'Off I went and signed up for three years to do my bit for Queen and country. The first six months at Farnborough and Aldershot were a piece of cake...the abuse was right across the board—the same for black and white. My advantage was that I was big. But when the training finished, things changed. The racist jibes began to flow with gusto. Colchester was where I was initiated into what being black meant in Her Majesty's forces: the abuse was non-stop. I was already disillusioned but determined to make a go of things.

'We were eventually sent to Belfast. Yes, the red carpet was waiting for us when we flew in. The warm welcome we received didn't prepare me for what was to come. Thinking back on it now, it never ceases to amaze me how gullible us working class squaddies were. We simply accepted as the truth our commanding officer's opening lecture that we were in Ireland to stop two sectarian factions murdering each other and other innocent people. I accepted that we were "not political but a peace-keeping force". What a load of crap.

'During my three tours, kicking in doors of ordinary working class people on and around the Brandywell area of Derry, or emptying pubs just to rouse the populace or implementing the attitude test and searches at road blocks, I never once felt we were wanted by anyone. The only people who were friendly were the RUC. What a surprise! But what is amazing is that although I

Criminalising a community

The success of the IRA's current campaign on the British mainland has embarrassed and frustrated the security establishment. What has not been reported, however, is how the state has used this to unleash a campaign of terror against the Irish community in Britain.

Andrea Morgan spoke to Denise and Patricia—two young Irish women whose home was raided last month by Special Branch officers complete with sniffer dogs and guns. Patricia and Denise, like thousands of other Irish people in this country, were terrorised under the Prevention of Terrorism Act which will be 15 years old this November

Denise: I was here on my own. I'd just come out of the shower when I heard the door being burst open. The next thing I knew there were a load of men in the hall, and there was a gun. I was shoved into the bathroom. The guy pointing the gun at me told me to put my hands against the wall. He said they were taking me to Wood Green police station.

Andrea: How many men were there?

Denise: About six at this stage. I had my hands against the wall and I kept saying 'what have I done?' but they didn't answer. They just shoved a bit of paper in my face. I couldn't read it.

Andrea: Did you know who they were?

Denise: No and I still don't know. They took me to my bedroom and told me it had to be searched. They were asking me questions by now, about my flatmate, where I worked, how long I've been in England, where in Ireland I come from. By this time my flatmate Patricia had come home and my boyfriend had arrived. They took him into the bedroom and questioned him asking how long he'd known us and what religion he was. When he said he was Church of England, they said, 'Oh, you

won't be popular with these girls then'. I didn't even know Steve's religion. They also asked him if we ever had any political arguments.

Andrea: So how were you reacting to all this?

Denise: I was gobsmacked. Eventually they showed me the warrant and the guy underlined the important part which said it was issued under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. I was very scared. What with the dog and the guns and all these men.

Andrea: How thoroughly did they search the place?

Denise: Very. When the sniffer dog came out of my room several men went in there. They went through my magazines, my photos and they read my letters. They even emptied out all my earrings on to the bed and picked up each one. It was horrible. I heard one of them saying 'This is a waste of time, there's nothing here'. But they carried on.

Andrea: Patricia, it must have been quite a shock coming home to all this.

Patricia: Yes, I got home about half eight. When I saw the door smashed in I got really scared. I went into the off-licence next door and they told me it was the police. Just then they surrounded me. The shop was crowded. All the locals had gathered to watch as this big policeman flashed his ID card and said 'police'. I was humiliated. What must they have thought seeing me being taken away like that? I was hustled into my flat and up the stairs. I couldn't believe it! The place was saturated with suited men. They even had our landlady in a room questioning her about us. I was getting really scared. I saw this dog coming out of my room, then I saw Denise—she was totally devastated. When I tried to talk to her they surrounded us. They wouldn't let me talk to my own flatmate in our own flat.

Andrea: Did they search through your room?

Patricia: Yes. They put rubber gloves on and went through everything: my underwear, my nursing stuff, my letters—it was just so personal. It was an invasion.

Andrea: What did you think was happening?

Continued on page 16



JOE BOATMAN

thought the RUC were a bunch of racist bastards, I never saw myself as implementing the same system as they were.

'When a six-year old spits at you and groups of shoppers treat you like dirt, you rationalise the experience as typical of their ignorance or that they don't understand the situation. Not once did I stop and look at the situation. I could not see that these people really understood what the British state was all about. They were "the enemy"—a point that was impressed upon us as soon as we got there. These people, we were being told, are all potential "terrorists" and you had to treat them with total mistrust and contempt. I was never surprised by stories of shit-scared squaddies with itchy trigger fingers letting off rounds into civilians. I remember once hearing a shot being fired knowing from the sound that it had struck a human body. When I rushed to see what had happened I saw that a squaddie had gut-shot another squaddie by mistake.

'I was one of the lucky ones who bought himself out. It has taken me over 10 years to patch together my experiences and make some sense of them. I read the IFM's Irish War and watched the video *The Longest War*. It was only then that I began to realise the role I had played as part of Britain's terror-machine. I realised, too, that the British state did not give a damn about me or my family.... I can't undo what I did. But I realise now that those ordinary Irish people had it all sussed. I realise even more that I have more in common with them than I ever had with either my fellow-squaddies or the people who run this society. This is the message I am committed to spread to all working class squaddies and would-be squaddies. That's why I joined the IFM.'

Criminalising a community

Continued from page 15

Patricia: They showed me the warrant. I kept thinking about the Birmingham Six and the Guildford Four. I really thought they would arrest me and I know they don't need evidence to put you away for life—if you're Irish. I was scared and I was relieved when they left.

Andrea: How has the experience affected you?

Denise: I've decided to go back home to Ireland even though I've no chance of getting a job back there. I've just lost any sense of security. Even though we asked them to fix it, they left our front door smashed in. For two nights we slept on the kitchen floor so we could hear if anyone came.

Patricia: I think this kind of thing is happening to Irish people all over London but they're too scared to publicise it. They're scared that the police will come back or people will be saying 'there's no smoke without fire, they must be mixed up in something'. So they stay silent, and it continues. I found out that nine other Irish households were raided that night.

Andrea: How did your friends and workmates react?

Patricia: Most were very supportive, and shocked that this kind of thing goes on in Britain. I'm a nurse and work with a lot of other nurses, but what sets me apart is that as an Irish person I could be subjected to a house-search at any time. When I go home I see women—old women sometimes—being body-searched on public roads in full view of British soldiers. I think women in this country wouldn't tolerate it. Most people don't know it's happening to women in Northern Ireland. I intend to make this an issue.

Irish POWs speak out!

We reprint some letters and poems sent to us from Maghaberry prison and the Maze by Irish prisoners of war whom the British state wants to silence while it brands them as ordinary criminals and gangsters

A Chara. Republicans have long been the victims of injustice in the notorious Diplock courts and this is especially highlighted in the ongoing series of the so-called 'corporals trials'. The Diplock courts, aided and abetted by the media, have hounded the nationalist community simply because it had the courage to stand firm and defend itself when faced with armed British soldiers. In any other country people involved in the defence of their communities would be hailed as heroes. In the Six Counties, they have been handed out harsh and brutal prison sentences.

Throughout the struggle the Brits have used every weapon at their disposal; from internment to the Special Powers Act. And once in prison, the Northern Ireland Office and the judicial system have collaborated in ensuring that people, once imprisoned, will remain so for as long as possible. Sentences have become stiffer while the system of remission has been changed so that people must serve two-thirds of their sentence instead of half. Loyalists, on the other hand, have constantly been given favourable consideration when appearing in the Diplock courts.

Here in Maghaberry, we have witnessed over the last few years some of the most blatant examples of 'British justice'. Ann Cavanagh, Karen Quinn and Nancy McCulloch were imprisoned on the flimsiest evidence while three Loyalist women when charged with several murders between them walked free after only brief periods of remand.

Ann Cavanagh from Derry was arrested after the British Army and RUC carried out a raid on her home where they 'found' what they described as an arms hide. It was empty and no weapons were ever found. She was sentenced to 10 years. Nancy McCulloch was given two and a half years merely for allowing a man into her home when he called to enquire about a member of her family. She was accused of harbouring a terrorist.

Karen Quinn was sentenced to nine years' imprisonment for the relatively minor act of making her home available to republican activists. She is the mother of three young children.

Compare these with the Loyalist women. It is plain to see how the Diplock courts work: one woman was charged with the murder of a man she and her co-accused thought was a Catholic. She got three years. Another received a suspended sentence for her part in the sectarian murder of Catholics.

The British government boasts of British justice around the world. But the world has recently witnessed the release of the Guildford Four and the Winchester Three. We hope it won't be much longer before we witness the release of the Birmingham Six. Perhaps then those who have been so outraged by such gross miscarriages of justice will see fit to turn their attention to the plight of all political hostages.

*Denise Cassidy
Maghaberry prison*

British ways and British laws

Confusion	people appear
Shots, lots of them	through a gap
I think	a door open by invaders
A burst through the door	friendly faces now
Where we played	shocked
Screams	sad
A wife	I'm ushered away
A mother and her daughters	to a neighbour's
Where's daddy?	with a memory
Mum and me watch	to last a lifetime
in the corner of the hallway	of British ways and British
while his life soaks	laws
the carpet	<i>Johnny Loughery, The Maze</i>

The political prisoners

We feel fear, we feel
sorry and pain, we feel
sad and angry.
We have nothing yet we are
proud!
We've seen our people suffer
We've seen the young look
old
We've seen death and torture
take its ugly hold.
We have nothing yet we are
proud!
We've heard their cries

for help, like the snow
when it rains, washed
away to be forgotten.
We have nothing yet we are
proud!

Gary Kearney, The Maze

*We would like to express our gratitude
and thanks for the donation the
comrades in the Maze sent to 'Irish
Freedom' to help cover the costs of
production*

Four months in the Irish War



■ **Friday 8 June:** Nick Mullen is sentenced to 30 years' imprisonment after being found guilty of providing safe houses for the IRA and conspiracy to cause explosions.

■ **Saturday 9 June:** An IRA bomb explodes at Territorial Headquarters in City Road, London.

■ **Tuesday 12 June:** Former home of Lord McAlpine is damaged by IRA bomb. Lord Donaldson, the judge who convicted the Maguire Seven, said he would not give evidence at the inquiry into their convictions.

■ **Thursday 14 June:** Director of public prosecutions announces that the convictions of the Maguire Seven are 'unsafe and unsatisfactory'. An IRA bomb explodes at a British Army training centre in Hanover, West Germany.

■ **Saturday 16 June:** Paul Hughes is charged with the killing of two Australian tourists in Holland.

■ **Monday 18 June:** West Germany announces its intention to extradite Donna Maguire over alleged involvement in the death of a British soldier in 1989.

■ **Thursday 21 June:** An IRA bomb explodes at RAF Stanmore Park in north-west London. Prison officer John Hanna is convicted of supplying information to the IRA which led to the murder of fellow warder Brian Armour. He is jailed for life.

■ **Monday 25 June:** An IRA bomb explodes at the Tory Carlton Club, in the West End of London.

■ **Thursday 28 June:** A British soldier is shot by the IRA in Pomeroy, County Tyrone.

■ **Monday 2 July:** Nelson Mandela causes a storm while visiting Dublin by calling on Britain to negotiate with the IRA. Grosvenor Road RUC station in central Belfast is attacked by IRA RPG rockets.

■ **Thursday 12 July:** The report into the case of the Maguire Seven is published and criticises Lord Donaldson, senior judges and forensic experts.

■ **Tuesday 17 July:** Peter Brooke's 'peace initiative' collapses after meetings with Unionist leaders James Molyneux and Ian Paisley.

■ **Friday 20 July:** An IRA bomb explodes in the stock exchange after a series of warnings.

■ **Monday 23 July:** An unnamed interviewee on a World in Action programme claims he planted the bomb in Birmingham in 1974 and that the

Birmingham Six are innocent.

■ **Tuesday 24 July:** In Armagh City an IRA landmine explosion kills three RUC men and a nun. Desmond Ellis is charged with possession of explosives, the first case under the new 1987 Extradition Act.

■ **Monday 30 July:** Ian Gow, Tory MP and chairman of the Conservative backbench committee on Northern Ireland, is killed in an IRA car-bomb.

■ **Friday 2 August:** Eleven British soldiers are found on the South side of the Border in County Monaghan and 'escorted' back into Northern Ireland.

■ **Tuesday 6 August:** An IRA bomb intended for Lord Armstrong, peer and former cabinet secretary, is discovered.

■ **Monday 13 August:** IRA bomb found at the home of the former Army commander in Northern Ireland, Anthony Farrar-Hockley.

■ **Wednesday 15 August:** Two IRA bombs are found on the South Armagh border railway track and in a bus near a military checkpoint in County Donegal.

■ **Thursday 16 August:** Terence McGeogh and Gerard Harratty are accused of wounding 10 British soldiers in an Army barracks in Germany during July 1988. This is the first time IRA members have stood trial in West Germany.

■ **Monday 20 August:** Lord Denning, former master of the rolls, receives a letter from the Guildford Four asking him to retract his statements published in *The Spectator*. He had said if the death penalty had been imposed 'they'd probably have hanged the right men'. Martin Quigley from Dundalk and an American are jailed for a total of 18 years for organising the supply of anti-helicopter rockets to the IRA.

■ **Thursday 6 September:** IRA bomb explodes at the Harland & Wolff shipyard in Belfast damaging a Royal Navy ship. An inquest hears that republican solicitor Patrick Finucane was

killed by the Ulster Freedom Fighters with a gun given to them by a UDR officer.

■ **Friday 7 September:** Adrian Hopkins, charged with shipping 140 tons of arms into the Republic, is refused bail by a high court in Dublin.

■ **Saturday 8 September:** Democratic Unionist leader Ian Paisley is expelled from the Loyalist organisation, the Apprentice Boys of Derry, after disputing an application for funds available

through the Anglo-Irish agreement.

■ **Monday 10 September:** An IRA bomb explodes at an Army and Navy recruiting office in Derby.

■ **Thursday 13 September:** A report from the Calcutt inquiry rules that Colin Wallace, a former M15 information officer, was unfairly dismissed and recommends £30 000 compensation.

■ **Friday 14 September:** At the Anglo-Irish conference in Dublin, Peter Brooke (Northern Ireland secretary) and Gerry Collins (Irish foreign affairs minister) propose talks with Unionists and moderate nationalists in the autumn.

■ **Sunday 16 September:** RUC constable Louis Robinson is shot dead by the IRA near two Army lookout posts in Crossmaglen. Three days later the RUC finds the body.

■ **Monday 17 September:** Sergeant Bernard Cox is shot by the IRA in Finchley, Margaret Thatcher's constituency.

■ **Tuesday 18 September:** Air Vice Marshall Sir Peter Terry, former governor of Gibraltar, who authorised the SAS killings of three unarmed IRA volunteers in 1988, is shot in his home by the IRA.

■ **Wednesday 19 September:** Margaret Thatcher describes IRA activities as 'guerrilla warfare'.

■ **Saturday 22 September:** Government considers changing the Prevention of Terrorism Act to include the payment of £100 000 rewards for information about the IRA.

■ **Tuesday 25 September:** Two former members of the Royal Irish Rangers are jailed for a total of 14 years for desertion and terrorist offences.

■ **Friday 28 September:** An IRA bomb is found by accident at a special conference on combating terrorism, yards from the Carlton Club which was bombed by the IRA in June.

Tessa Myer and Julie Nevin



No 'ordinary' men

Tessa Myers looks at the background of two victims of recent IRA attacks.

'He was such a splendid character, one of complete integrity.' (Ivor Stanbrook, vice-chairman of the Tory Northern Ireland backbench committee, on Ian Gow)

'No one can doubt his sincerity or his courage and it is appalling he should lose his life because of these qualities.' (Neil Kinnock, Labour Party leader, on Ian Gow)

Ian Gow, Tory MP and chairman of the Northern Ireland backbench committee, was killed by an IRA car-bomb on 30 July. Press and politicians denounced it as the murder of an ordinary man who possessed the virtues of a decent citizen. According to *The Independent* the IRA was indulging in 'murder for its own sake'. He was portrayed as defenceless and as likely to be attacked as any other member of the public.

Seven weeks later the IRA shot Sir Peter Terry. The press portrayed Terry, like Gow, as an 'ordinary citizen' who had become a victim of criminal psychopaths. In fact Gow and Terry were anything but 'ordinary'.

Shoot-to-kill

When Ian Gow left for work on the morning of his death it was not to do an ordinary job. As Margaret Thatcher's parliamentary private secretary between 1979 and 1984, he played a vital role in formulating British policy in Ireland. He advised Thatcher in 1981 when ten republicans including Bobby Sands MP died on hunger strike opposing British occupation policies. He helped institute Britain's shoot-to-kill policy, he spoke out for the

return of 'selective' internment without trial and he backed up his friend Sir Peter Terry by criticising Amnesty International for daring to question the Gibraltar killings. Trained as a major in the 15/19th Hussars patrolling the border in County Tyrone, Gow was familiar with the British military machinery required to control the nationalists of the Six Counties.

Denied free speech

Only a week before he died Gow attacked Granada TV's World in Action team for failing to reveal the identity of two men claiming they were responsible for the Birmingham pub bombings of 1974. He demanded that the director of public prosecutions bring charges against the producers of the programme. Those speaking out against the injustices of the British establishment and proclaiming the innocence of the Birmingham Six were to be denied the free speech Ian Gow apparently held so dear.

Air Chief Marshall Sir Peter Terry was a leading member of the British military establishment for 45 years. He was deputy supreme allied commander in Europe between 1981 and 1984. As governor and commander in chief of Gibraltar he was responsible for authorising the SAS murder of the three IRA volunteers Mairead Farrell, Danny McCann and Sean Savage in Gibraltar in March 1988. Very 'ordinary'.

The British establishment has been visibly shaken by the recent run of successful IRA strikes at the heart of their system. In each case, from the Carlton Club and the stock exchange to Ian Gow and Sir Peter Terry, they have tried to present Irish freedom fighters as a threat to us all. 'Us and them' from the mouths of the British establishment is supposed to mean 'us, the ordinary British people' and 'them, the murdering psychopaths of the Irish republican movement'. It is a well-worn theme of the Irish War.

The very fact that so much effort is spent trying to convince us that an air chief marshal and a Tory MP are just ordinary folk shows the importance of this type of propaganda for the British establishment.

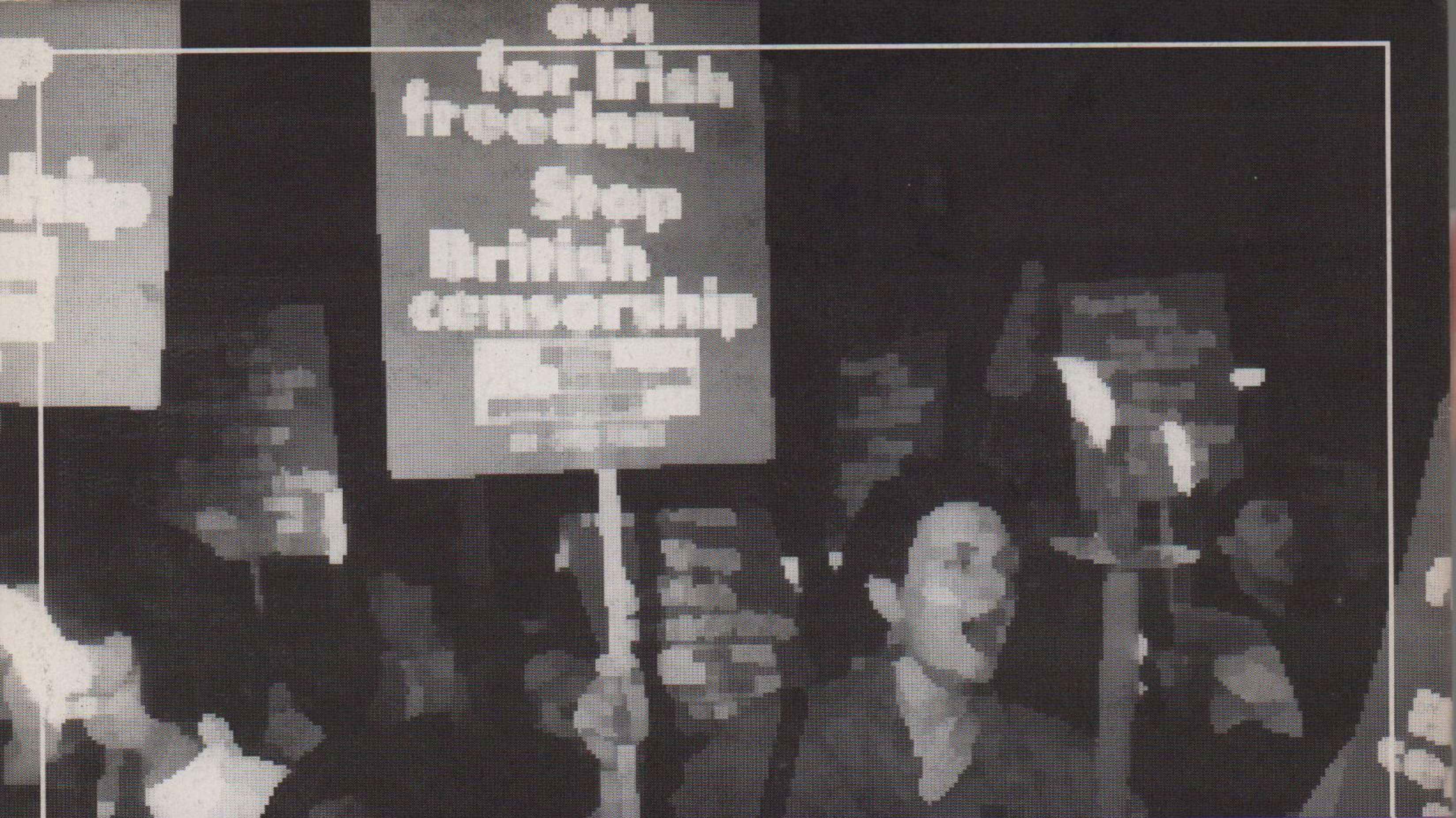
Enforcing oppression

Gow and Terry were not targeted because of their 'courage' or 'sincerity', least of all for their 'ordinariness'. They were attacked because of their extraordinary role in enforcing the oppression of Irish people through shoot-to-kill tactics and the ongoing occupation of the Six Counties.

We must resist all attempts in this country to whip up a sense of solidarity with Gow and Terry. As long as we identify with these British warmongers we will remain under the establishment's thumb. The only way of achieving the sort of political independence we need if we are to win a better life for ourselves here in Britain is to take sides in the Irish War with the ordinary people who are fighting for their right to self-determination.

'It is a loss that is difficult to grasp. Every day for four years he went through that door behind me and was in No 10 and parliament. I do not think I could have done those four years without Ian.'
Margaret Thatcher the day Ian Gow died





Join the Irish Freedom Movement!

What we fight for

The Irish Freedom Movement is the most active solidarity organisation in Britain. We organise the annual anti-internment commemoration which has become a national event (see pages 4-7 for a report on this year's march). Throughout the year, we hold meetings, dayschools, protests and pickets, and produce *Irish Freedom*, leaflets, posters and stickers in support of the three demands around which we organise:

Troops out now!

The British state is the force for oppression and violence in Ireland. It must bear the blame for all the bloodshed of the 'troubles'. Britain has no progressive role to play in any part of Ireland. The only hope of a just peace lies in forcing the immediate withdrawal of all occupation forces.

Self-determination for the Irish people!

National self-determination is a basic democratic right. The Irish people are denied the right to determine their own future by the British-

imposed partition of Ireland and the occupation of the Six Counties by British forces. While any part of Irish soil is occupied by foreign forces, the Irish must have the right to fight for a 32-county republic.

Smash the Prevention of Terrorism Act!

The PTA is the British face of the Irish War. Since it was introduced by the last Labour government in 1974, the PTA's powers of detention without charge and expulsion from Britain have been used to terrorise the Irish community over here and to endorse the idea that all Irish people are potential 'terrorists'. Campaigning against this draconian act is a vital part of building support for Irish freedom in Britain.

Join the IFM

There is plenty of work to be done if we are to get the message of Irish freedom across to British people. You can play an important part, by joining the Irish Freedom Movement and campaigning for the cause in the labour movement, in your communities and on the streets.

If you want information about our forthcoming events or about the IFM's approach to building a solidarity movement in this country that can get British troops out of Ireland, then get in touch.

We have branches in:

Glasgow ■ Newcastle ■ Durham ■ Manchester ■ Liverpool ■ Sheffield ■ Birmingham ■ Coventry ■ Nottingham ■ Leicester ■ Oxford ■ Leeds ■ Wakefield ■ Bristol ■ Cardiff ■ Brighton ■ Southampton ■ West London ■ North London ■ South London

The Irish War has already gone on for over 21 years too long. We cannot afford to waste another moment. So don't delay—sign up today! Annual membership costs £10 for individuals, £25 for union branches/other organisations and includes a free subscription to *Irish Freedom*.

Start selling 'Irish Freedom'

If you are new to the IFM and want to get involved but live in a part of the country where we don't have a branch, write to us and we'll send you all the materials you need. As a special offer we will send you 10 copies of the bulletin for only £5 to get you started. Fill in the form below:
I/we would like to join the IFM and enclose a cheque or postal order for £_____
I/we would like to start selling *Irish Freedom*. Cheque/postal order enc. for £_____. for _____ copies.

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