

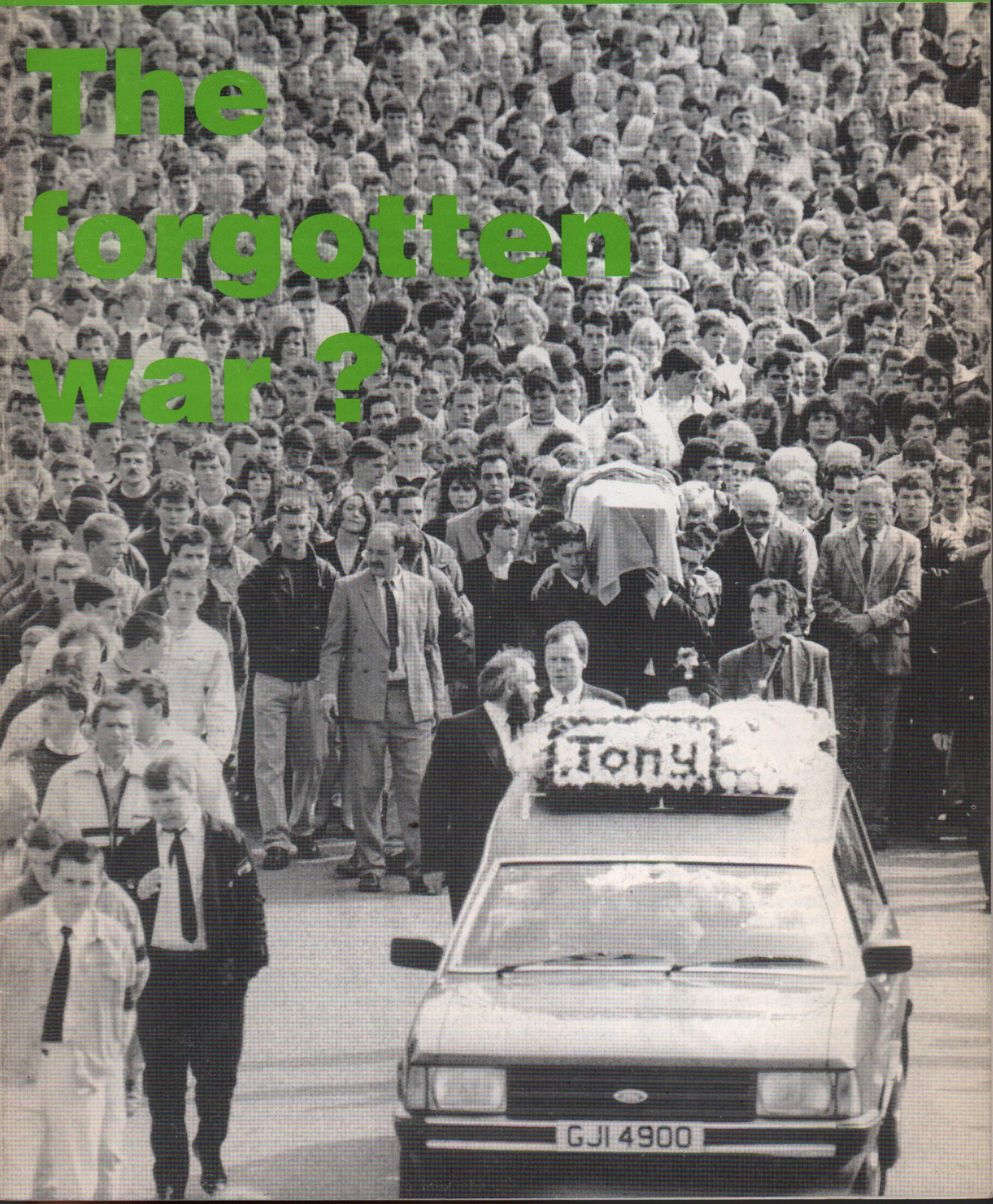
Irish Freedom

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Autumn 1991

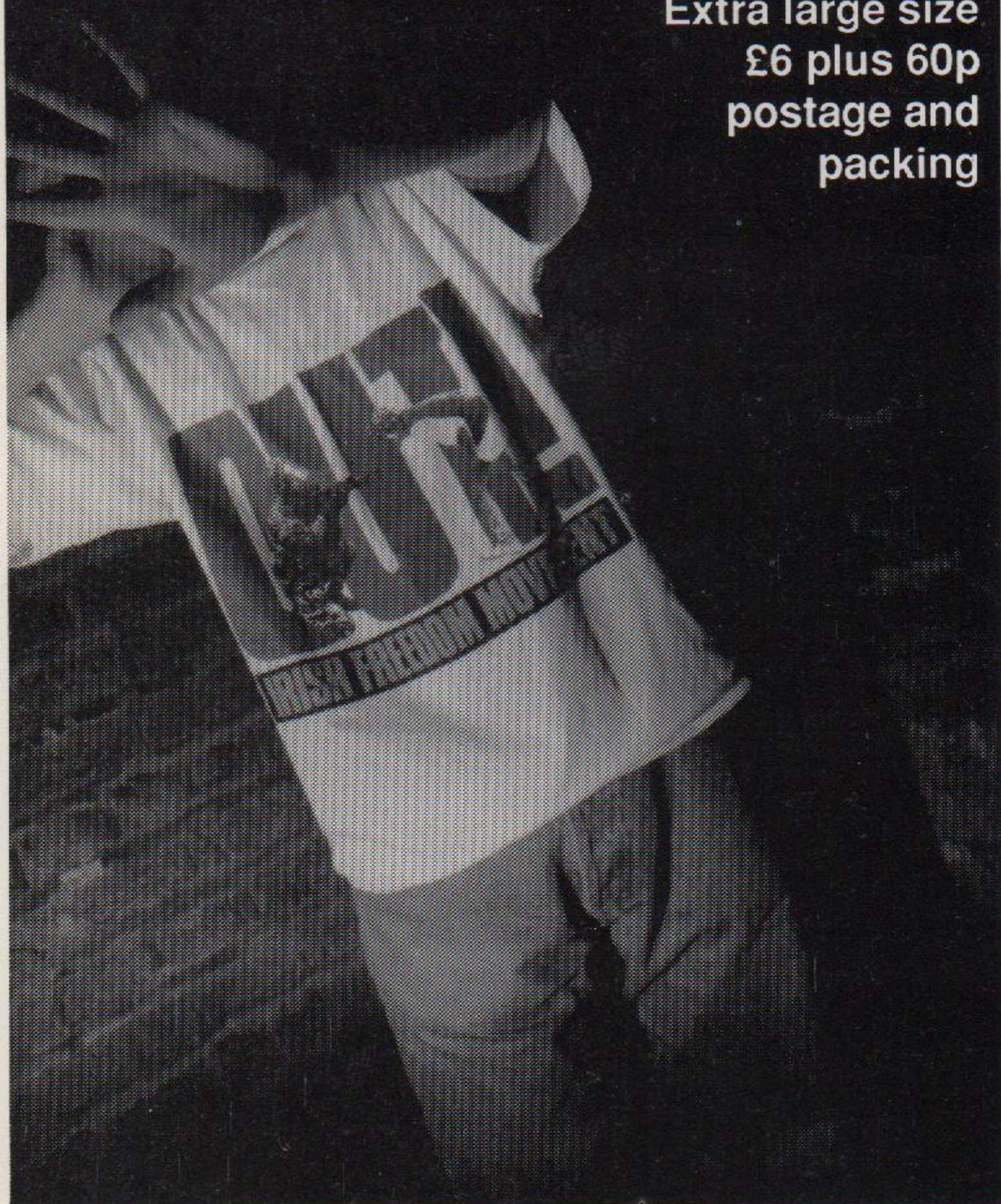
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EDITORIAL

AUTUMN 1991

Whatever happened to the war?

Over the summer months there has been an escalation of Britain's 22-year old war in the North of Ireland. Britain has increased troop numbers to levels not seen for over a decade. It has introduced new armour piercing weaponry in the Border areas. There is a higher military profile in urban republican strongholds like West and North Belfast, Derry and Strabane.

A steady succession of Irish nationalists, including IRA volunteers, Sinn Fein councillors and political activists, have been sent to their graves at the hands of British soldiers, paramilitary police and Loyalist gunmen. A greater number of nationalist youth, especially in the Ballymurphy and Beechmount areas of West Belfast, have been targeted for arrest and torture. Despite these higher levels of surveillance and repression the IRA has proved more than capable of responding with a series of successful attacks on British military personnel and targets. At the level of armed activity at least, the war shows no signs of going away.

On this side of the Irish Sea, however, the war has virtually disappeared as a political issue. Far from the increased tempo of the war arousing more interest here, the war is simply ignored. The disappearance of the Irish War as a British political issue marks a major change.

Throughout the past two decades there has never, of course, been a mass movement in Britain in support of Irish freedom. But there was for most of that time a level of public awareness and interest about events in Ireland. As a result the British establishment has at least felt uneasy and insecure enough to put great effort into the propaganda war at home. Driven by its instinct for survival, the ruling class betrayed its concern for the potential political time-bomb the Irish War represented in British politics.

Time and again, the politicians and media peddled the big lie that the struggle for Irish unity and political independence was nothing more than a criminal, terrorist conspiracy with no political legitimacy or popular support. The Irish War was presented as, and for the British public became, a law and order problem. For a long time the powers that be in Britain were defensive enough to

want to hide away from open view the more brutal and coercive aspects of their occupation.

Today they have much greater confidence. They feel under no domestic pressure. They have no worries at home about the Irish issue. They are aware that as an issue it engenders little political interest or debate among ordinary British people. What goes on in the North of Ireland is viewed as a slightly unpleasant fact of life rather than as a political problem. When it is in the news, people react with a sense of resignation and apathy rather than any yearning for a solution. When it is not in the news, it is just forgotten.

So when an SAS shoot-to-kill squad executed three IRA men in County Tyrone this June, the British media openly reported it as an 'SAS shoot-to-kill operation'. In the past it might have denied SAS involvement. It would certainly have denied that there is a shoot-to-kill policy. Today there are no such inhibitions.

When the war directly intrudes into British life through bombings or prison escapes, as it has this year, it has become more an occasion for bemoaning the inefficiencies and inadequacies of British Rail, the British police or the prison system than for an outburst of venom against the IRA or for another wave of vicious anti-Irish chauvinism. At most the IRA is portrayed over here with ridicule or sarcasm, rather than, as in the past, as a mortal threat or insidious challenge to the 'British way of life'. And this sort of response is itself popularly accepted as common sense. Neither the issue of Ireland nor the media coverage of it can today be said to arouse a sense of questioning among British people.

The popular lack of interest and concern within Britain about Ireland, and the establishment confidence this has encouraged, cannot be explained from developments in the Anglo-Irish context alone. It is an instance of a much broader phenomenon in the Western world. In recent months the forces of imperialism have gained confidence and have taken to the offensive. The Gulf War marked a turning point towards more open and unrestrained imperialist intervention in the third world.

The rehabilitation of imperialism is one of the results of the demise of

Stalinism and social democracy and of the collapse of the Soviet Union. For ordinary people in the imperialist countries this experience has reinforced a lack of belief in collective action and induced passivity, a sense that nothing much matters, and that it is pointless to try to change things. For the imperialist powers it represents an unprecedented opportunity to pursue their interests without having any credible opposition to worry about.

Of immediate concern to supporters of Irish freedom is the way this new international political climate gives the British establishment a freer hand to prosecute its war in Ireland. This is the context in which to view the escalation of British attempts to marginalise, isolate and defeat the republican movement. The targeted repression of republicans of recent years has been complemented by political initiatives like the Brooke talks and, more recently, by intimidating speculation about the reintroduction of internment and a new wave of anti-IRA black propaganda directed at nationalists.

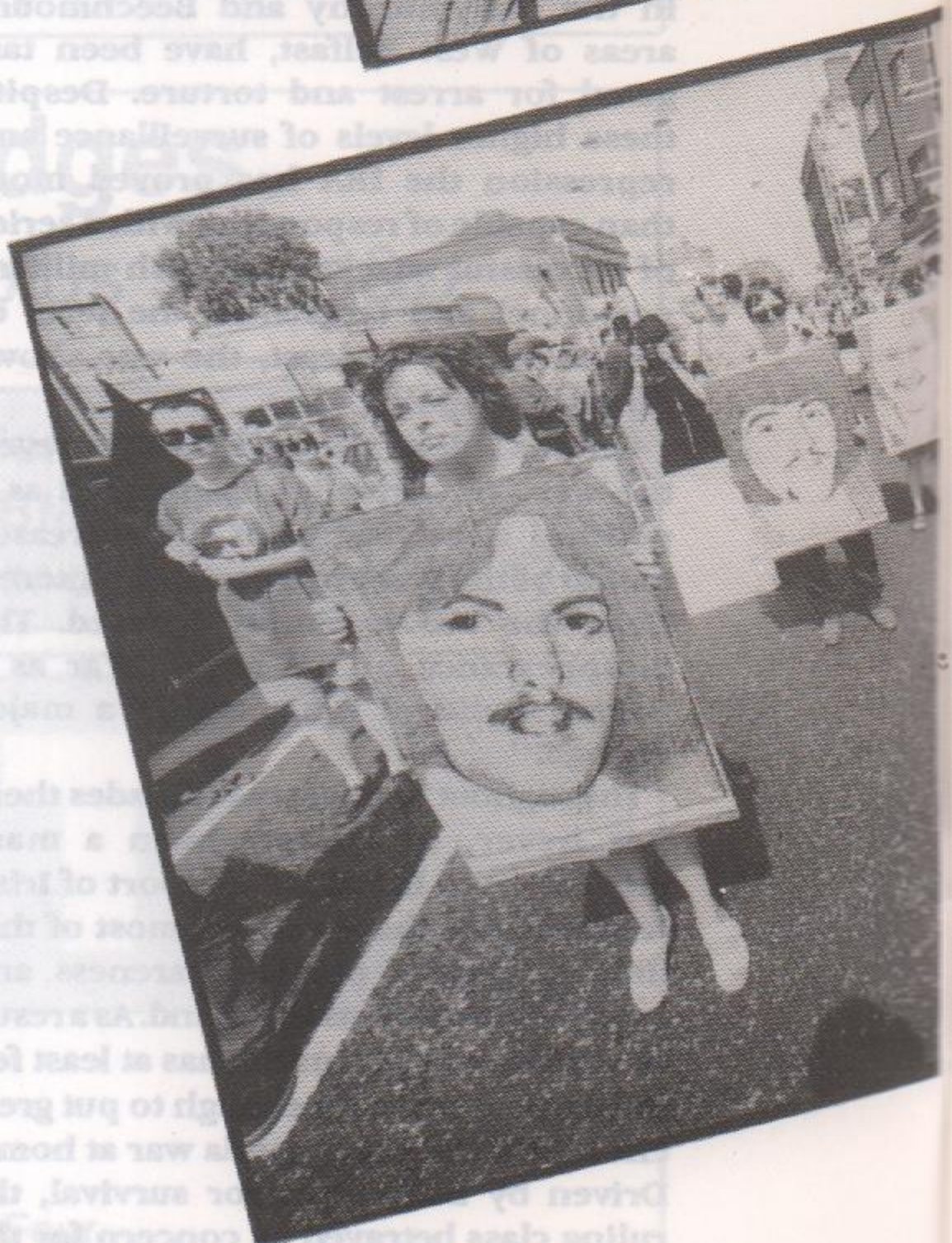
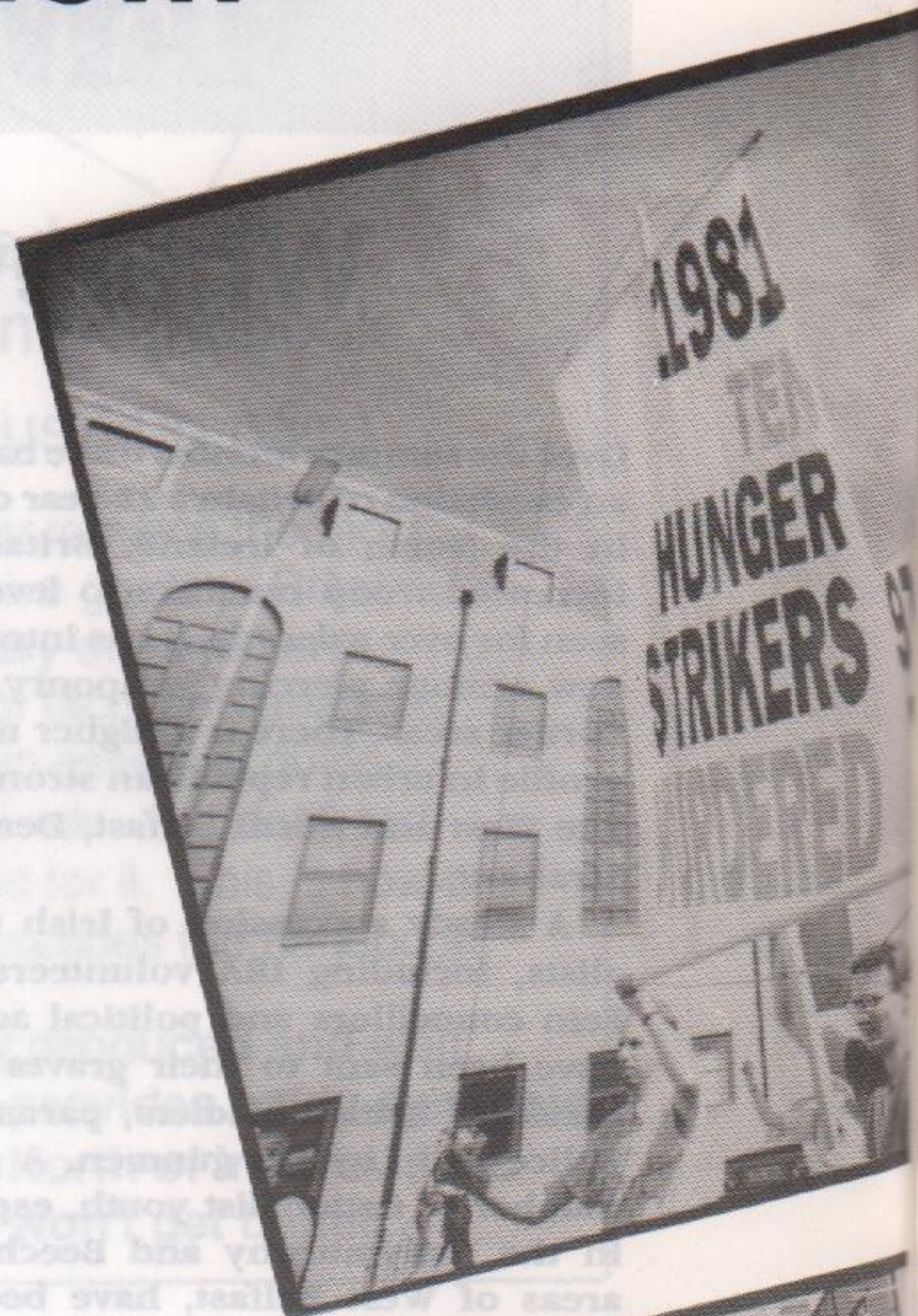
So far, the resilience and defiance of the hard core republican supporters in the North has limited the success of these measures. The collapse of the hyped-up, British sponsored 'peace movement' in Newry in August was a welcome sign that not everything is going Britain's way. The 20 000 who marched to commemorate the hunger-strikes and the anniversary of internment in Belfast were further proof that the spirit of resistance endures, as was the election of another Sinn Fein councillor in North Belfast.

But the possibility of the further marginalisation of the republican movement remains a serious threat. The significant new feature is not the limited impact of British measures to date, but that the balance has shifted to encourage Britain to operate in this way. It has never been more important to pursue the task of clarifying the role of British imperialism in Ireland and to convince people in Britain that there is something we can do about it.

Irish Freedom is edited by Kevin Kelly, Fiona Foster and Vicky Rowan. It is written by supporters of the IFM, and is open to anyone genuinely interested in advancing solidarity work in Britain. If you would like to help, write to: *Irish Freedom*, BM, IFM, London WC1 3XX. Typeset by Paula.

Anti-internment demonstration 10 August 1991

The march for freedom

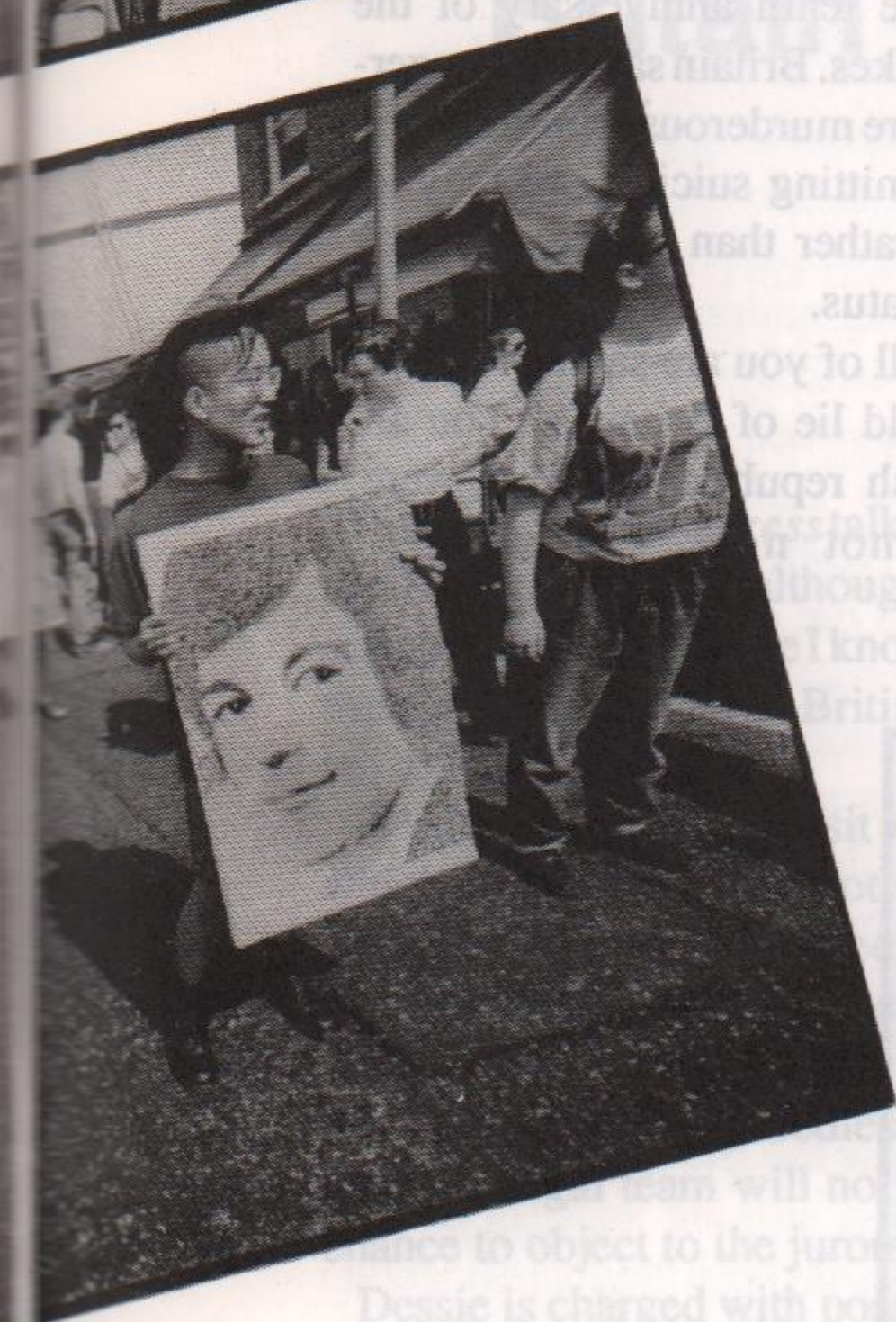
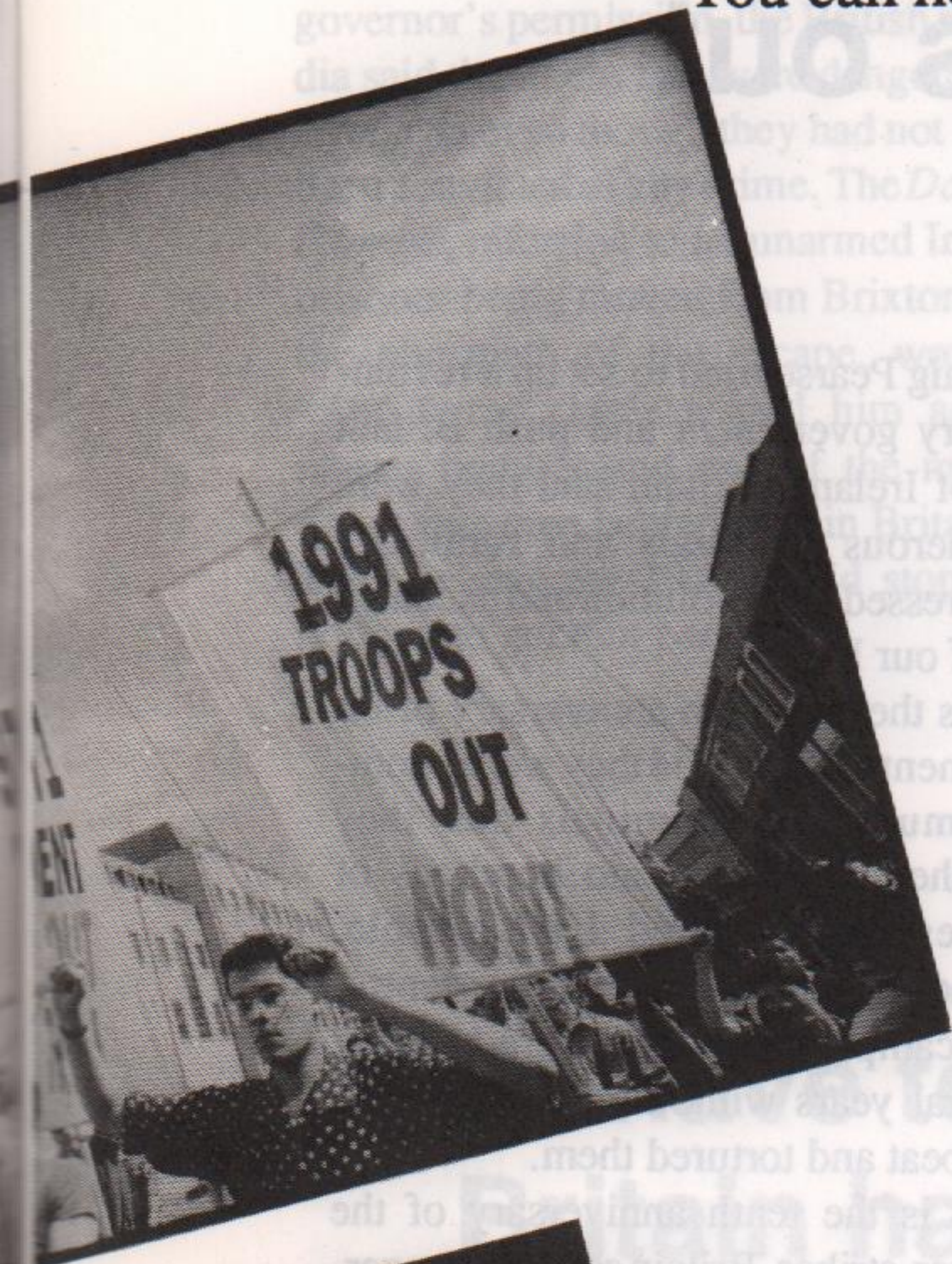


The local radio station issued a police warning to drivers on 10 August to avoid the Holloway Road area of North London because of a demonstration. Shoppers in Islington had obviously not noted the warning. They dropped their Safeways bags in amazement as 3000 demonstrators marched up the Holloway Road chanting 'Troops Out of Ireland, Prisoners Out of Jail!'. This year's Irish Freedom Movement march in commemoration of the introduction of internment without trial in Northern Ireland was as loud, colourful and well-organised as ever. Helping the march go with a bang were the drums of two Republican flute bands. Glasgow's Crossmaglen Patriots and the The Spirit of Freedom from the Six Counties helped fire up the marchers as they led the demonstration through North London.

This year's march had especial importance. Not only did it commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the introduction of internment but it was

IFM speaker John Fitzpatrick remembered the ten hunger-strikers: 'It is 10 years since the hunger-strikes...Britain forgets there will always be resistance. Each of those prisoners was already free in themselves. You can never keep the spirit of freedom behind bars.'

Photos: Simon Norfolk



also a year since the start of the Gulf crisis and just six months after Western forces slaughtered a quarter of a million Iraqis during Operation Desert Storm. We were marching not just in support of the anti-imperialist struggle in Ireland but in solidarity with all those around the world fighting for freedom and dignity.

Marchers filed into Whittington Park to hear speakers from the IFM, the Irish Anti-Extradition Committee and Sinn Féin. Loud cheers greeted statements of support for the armed struggle and for the nationalist communities who continue to fight for their freedom after 22 years of occupation.

The march had clearly shown to the

people of North London that there are significant numbers of people in this country who oppose Britain's occupation of Ireland and who are prepared to take to the streets in the struggle for freedom.

Anti-internment demonstration 10 August 1991

Martha Ellis speaks out

Martha Ellis, sister of Irish republican Dessie Ellis, addressed the rally at the end of the anti-internment march. Dessie was the first Irish republican to be extradited under Ireland's new extradition treaty with Britain. He has been charged with conspiracy to cause explosions and will face trial in October. By the time this bulletin is published he may well have begun a life sentence in a British jail. Here we reprint the text of Martha Ellis' speech

'First of all, I would like to say how pleased I am to be here, and to congratulate the Irish Freedom Movement on the success of this march. For Dessie, our family, and the Irish Anti-extradition Committee, it is always very heartening for us to see that there are so many people in Britain who do not support what British governments do in Ireland and who do not believe that Irish republicans are British criminals.

This is a year of anniversaries and I just want to mention them briefly. It is the two-hundredth anniversary of Irish republicanism. Two hundred years ago, Wolfe Tone and others founded the United Irishmen movement to remove Britain from our country and build a progressive, modern, free Ireland. Britain said Wolfe Tone was a murderous criminal, and they ruthlessly suppressed his movement.

It is the seventy-fifth anniversary of

Padraig Pearse tried to set up a revolutionary government and push Britain out of Ireland. Britain said they were murderous criminals and ruthlessly suppressed the revolution and executed 16 of our leaders.

It is the twentieth anniversary of internment. Britain said they were interning murderous criminals and they smashed their way into hundreds of homes and dragged Irish people, including schoolboys, into concentration camps where they were held for several years without charge or trial, and beat and tortured them.

It is the tenth anniversary of the hunger-strikes. Britain says the hunger-strikers were murderous criminals who were committing suicide and they let them die rather than give them back political status.

Today, all of you are saying "No" to that old, old lie of Britain's. You are saying Irish republicans never were, and are not now, British



SIMON NORFOLK

Martha Ellis speaking at the anti-internment demonstration, London, 10 August 1991

criminals. And you are saying that Britain has never been a civilising and politically neutral force in Ireland.

When two Irish republicans recently vacated Brixton prison without the governor's permission, the British media said that these two were dangerous criminals even though they had not yet been convicted of any crime. The *Daily Express*, referring to an unarmed Irish prisoner being moved from Brixton in the aftermath of the escape, wrote, "Anti-terror chiefs regard him as a master bomber and one of the most dangerous men behind bars in Britain. They believe the IRA would stop at nothing to get him back..."

going. My brother did not get justice in the Irish courts. It was no coincidence that an RAF plane had landed on Irish soil to collect Dessie on his stretcher an hour before the supreme court's decision was given.

The Dublin government turned out 600 soldiers and carloads of special branch and police, all for a dying man on a stretcher.

Since Dessie had never been in Britain and felt he had a strong case, and after discussions with the family, Dessie came off hunger-strike. My family were so happy. We believed we could show people he did not get justice in the Irish courts during his extradition battle.

people in Ireland who do not accept their presence in our country. And the law, as Britain's general Sir Frank Kitson put it, is just a useful device for "disposing of unwanted members of the public".

My brother's real "crime" is that he's Irish, he's republican, he's working class. If they can do this to Dessie and Irish people, they can do it to black people like the Tottenham Three, then they are moving closer and closer to the day when they can do it to all of you.

So I want to say to you that while you should support Dessie because he's a victim of injustice, you should also support him because your own

'We have to break the prison bars that Britain has put around our country'

That's the *Daily Express* talking about my brother Dessie - although the description isn't the Dessie I know. That's the sort of propaganda British people are fed all the time.

People fed that will sit on a jury which will decide my brother's fate. The special branch will weed out of the jury anyone who might be open-minded and prepared to believe that my brother is not a criminal. Needless to say, Dessie's legal team will not have any chance to object to the jurors.

Dessie is charged with possession of explosive substances between 1 January 1981 and 2 October 1983, and conspiring to cause explosions within the same period, even though he was in prison in Ireland and the USA most of that time and was never even in Britain.

My brother knew he would not get justice, so he went on a hunger-strike. The case was brought forward in the supreme court because the doctor said that after a certain period on hunger-strike his mind and eyesight would be

When his case came to court in London, the British authorities admitted they had no evidence that he was ever in Britain. So the charges were rejected. But then, to our horror, the goalposts were moved. Instead of releasing him, the magistrate entered two new charges.

A judicial review failed to resolve the issue of charges. It went then to the pretrial judge and, amazingly (or perhaps not so amazingly) the original charges, which had already been thrown out, were simply reinstated.

This judge was Swinton Thomas, who sentenced the Winchester Three to 25 years for conspiring with persons unknown to kill Tom King with a first-aid kit. Even the police said they would never have arrested the three except they had Irish accents. So Justice Swinton Thomas basically gave them 25 years for possession of Irish accents.

Proper rules, normal procedures, and so on do not exist in republican cases. The British authorities are at war with

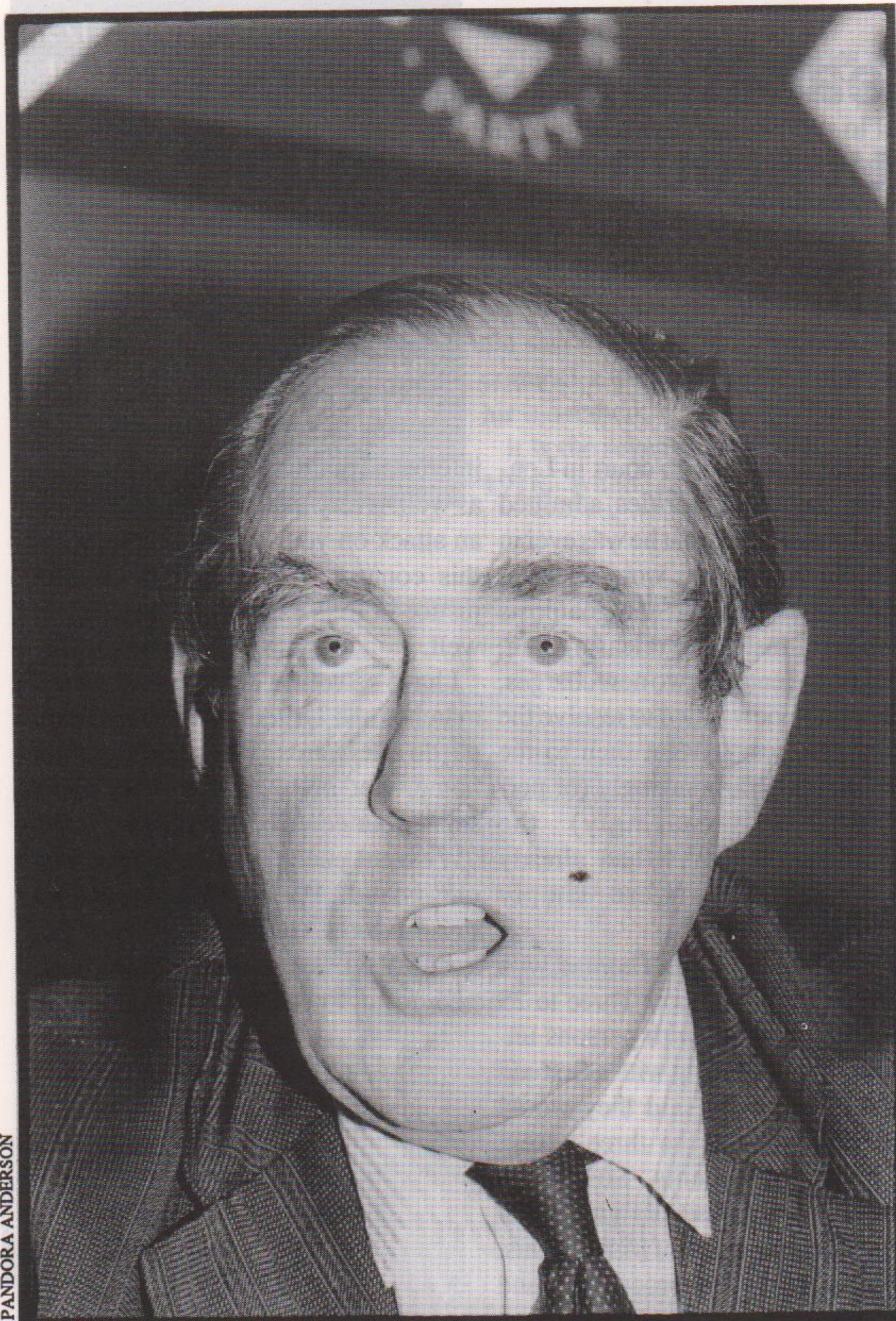
interests, your own futures, are at stake as well. Every attack on Irish people is an attack on your democratic rights in this country. And every victory for justice in Irish cases is your victory as well.

I have spoken at many meetings and marches and I often wonder what people do afterwards. Please don't just go home. Get involved, no matter how small your contribution may be.

We want peace for all the people on our island. We have to break the prison bars that Britain has put around our country. Let the Irish people go. Free Dessie Ellis.'

British strategy after Brooke

After the collapse of the Brooke talks, Hugh Mitchell examines both the successes of Britain's current strategy in Ireland and the difficulties it still faces in imposing a political solution to the Irish War



PANDORA ANDERSON

Peter Brooke - secretary of state for Northern Ireland

In the media post-mortems that have taken place in the wake of the collapse of the Brooke talks, the party that has come out smelling of roses has been the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP). But the party that played the most significant role in the talks was the one that was not invited to attend - Sinn Féin.

The Brooke talks were part of a long-term British strategy designed to weaken republicanism and promote constitutional nationalism. Following the hunger-strikes of the early eighties, Britain has pursued a twin-track strategy designed to isolate the republican movement from popular support in Ireland. On the one hand it has used political debates such as the Brooke talks to exclude Sinn Féin from normal political discussion on the future of Ireland. At the same time, the British authorities have developed a process of selective repression designed to deter nationalists from supporting the armed struggle. It is in this context that we should assess the Brooke initiative.

The most striking success of the Brooke talks has been the consolidation of an anti-republican consensus both sides of the border. In particular, a dialogue has potentially opened between the Loyalist parties in the North and the Twenty-six County government in the South that seemed remote at the time of the signing of the Anglo-Irish agreement in November 1985. Although the collapse of the Brooke talks means that we should not exaggerate the extent of this development, the talks have nevertheless brought these two



The other British diplomats

players together for the first time.

In the Twenty-six Counties the marginalisation and discrediting of republicanism has long been a feature of politics. However, politicians have often played the 'green card' to win popular support. Traditionally, the South has declared its eventual aim as Irish unification and Articles 2 and 3 of its constitution claim sovereignty over the whole of Ireland. This rhetorical nationalism has played a key part in creating the illusion that the Twenty-six Counties is an independent republic.

But now even the rhetorical nationalism of the past is being abandoned in favour of a more straightforward accommodation with Britain. Both Charles Haughey (the Fianna Fail taoiseach) and Mary Robinson (the Irish president) have declared their willingness to examine the 'constitutional obstacles' to restarting the talks - in other words they are willing to countenance dropping Articles 2 and 3 from the Irish constitution. The Southern establishment has successfully negotiated, in conjunction with Britain, one more step away from Irish self-determination.

In the North, the SDLP has gained much from the talks. The SDLP's proposal to examine the 'totality of relationships on the island' was faithfully reproduced in the 'three strands' agenda of the talks. Its long-term aim of deflecting nationalist anger through Southern 'participation' in Northern affairs came a little closer to

fruition during the talks.

For the Loyalists, the impact of the Brooke initiative has been far less straightforward. The talks exposed the lack of direction of the two main Loyalist parties - John Molyneaux's Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) and Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party (DUP). They have ended the talks with a mixture of bluster and compromise. Most people hold Unionist intransigence to blame for the ending of the talks. However, as we have argued in *Irish Freedom* it is Britain which held the whip hand in the Brooke talks. Still sore from their failed campaign against the Anglo-Irish agreement, Loyalist politicians have had no alternative but to follow the lead provided by Britain.

The more predictable wing of Loyalism responded to the talks by stepping up sectarian attacks against nationalists, and launching a modest incendiary bombing campaign in the Twenty-six Counties. Paisley and Molyneaux, meanwhile, comforted themselves with the 'Twelfth' parades - displays of Orange bigotry and Loyalist domination through areas such as the 95 per cent Catholic village of Pomeroy, Co Tyrone.

However, a retreat into Loyalist tradition does not provide a direction for the future. It is, ironically, to the growing anti-republican sentiment in the Twenty-six Counties that the Unionists are now beginning to look. They have already greeted Mary Robinson in Belfast City Hall, and have intervened in the debate about Articles 2 and 3.

The current political climate in the South can only strengthen such a cross-Border anti-republican coalition.

For the first time since partition in 1921, a political debate has developed in Ireland that is not about the existence of the Border or the pros and cons of Irish unification but is only concerned with the mechanisms of British rule in Ireland. The four 'constitutional' parties and the Irish and British governments have all explicitly and publicly agreed that the Border is here to stay.

British strategy over the past decade has certainly borne fruit. As compared to ten years ago, the republican movement has been contained, the Unionists marginalised, constitutional nationalists brought centre-stage and anti-republican sentiment consolidated. However, British occupation still breeds resistance. To whatever degree Britain manages to contain the republican movement, it still cannot pass off its military occupation of the Six Counties as part of a normal political process. The conflict of interest between nationalists and the British state, and its Loyalist agents, is too profound to be resolved through political dialogue, or any other British-imposed solution. Real progress will only come when Britain leaves Ireland and its future to the Irish people.

Sectarianism and war: tit for tat?

Chris Sweeney asks who are the real sectarians in Northern Ireland?

On the night of 29 March this year the all-too familiar consequences of British terror were visited upon the nationalist Drumbeg Estate in North Armagh. As reported in *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, at around 8.40pm a blue Escort van pulled up by a local shop. Two hooded men got out and one went inside. The gunman said, 'Provisional IRA, hit the floor!' He then shot both assistants, 17-year old Eileen Duffy and 19-year old Catriona Rennie. Brian Frizzell, who had approached the shop in an apparent attempt to help the two young women, turned and ran as the killer emerged. The killer chased Frizzell, shooting him in the leg and then pumping four more shots into him as he tumbled down the hill.

The murders, which were claimed by the Protestant Action Force (a cover name for the Ulster Volunteer Force), came after a series of death threats from UDR and RUC members. During their almost nightly visits to the shop the UDR and RUC men left with parting comments such as 'are you still here?' and 'it will not be long now'.

In the past 22 years of war over 700 members of the nationalist community have become victims of Loyalist killers, 22 of these sectarian murders taking place this year alone. Among the recent victims was 33-year old newsagent Jim Carson who was shot dead behind the counter of his 7-Eleven shop in West Belfast on 10 August. The group claiming responsibility for his murder, the Loyalist Retaliation and Defence Group, said that Carson had been targeted for the offence of stocking copies of *An Phoblacht/Republican News* and warned that other 'stockists'

would also face assassination.

In spite of a temporary 'ceasefire' by Loyalist paramilitaries, sectarian killings have increased this year. They have also become far more sinister. In addition to random terror killings, Loyalists have been more accurate in hitting selected republicans. Already six republican activists have been murdered this year, including two Sinn Féin councillors, Eddie Fullerton and Bernard O'Hagan.

Both Fullerton's and O'Hagan's murders were claimed by the Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF) - a cover name for the open and legal Loyalist paramilitary organisation the Ulster Defence Association. However, the military precision with which the killings were conducted strongly suggests that the killers were trained by the British authorities, if not actually members of the security forces themselves.

While the British media ignores the murders of Fullerton and O'Hagan, it claims that the killing of Gary Lynch by the IRA, in Derry on 9 August, was simply because he was a Protestant and a member of the Ulster Democratic Party. The press dismiss the fact that Lynch was also a member of the UFF and was responsible for carrying out attacks on the nationalist community.

The British authorities have presented these killings as part of an increasing cycle of 'tit for tat'. One commentator described it as a 'spiral of sectarian killings. In a recent statement Northern Ireland secretary Peter Brooke argued that, 'The security forces cannot stop the killings, that's a matter for the terrorists themselves. It is not within my power to change it. One just hopes that

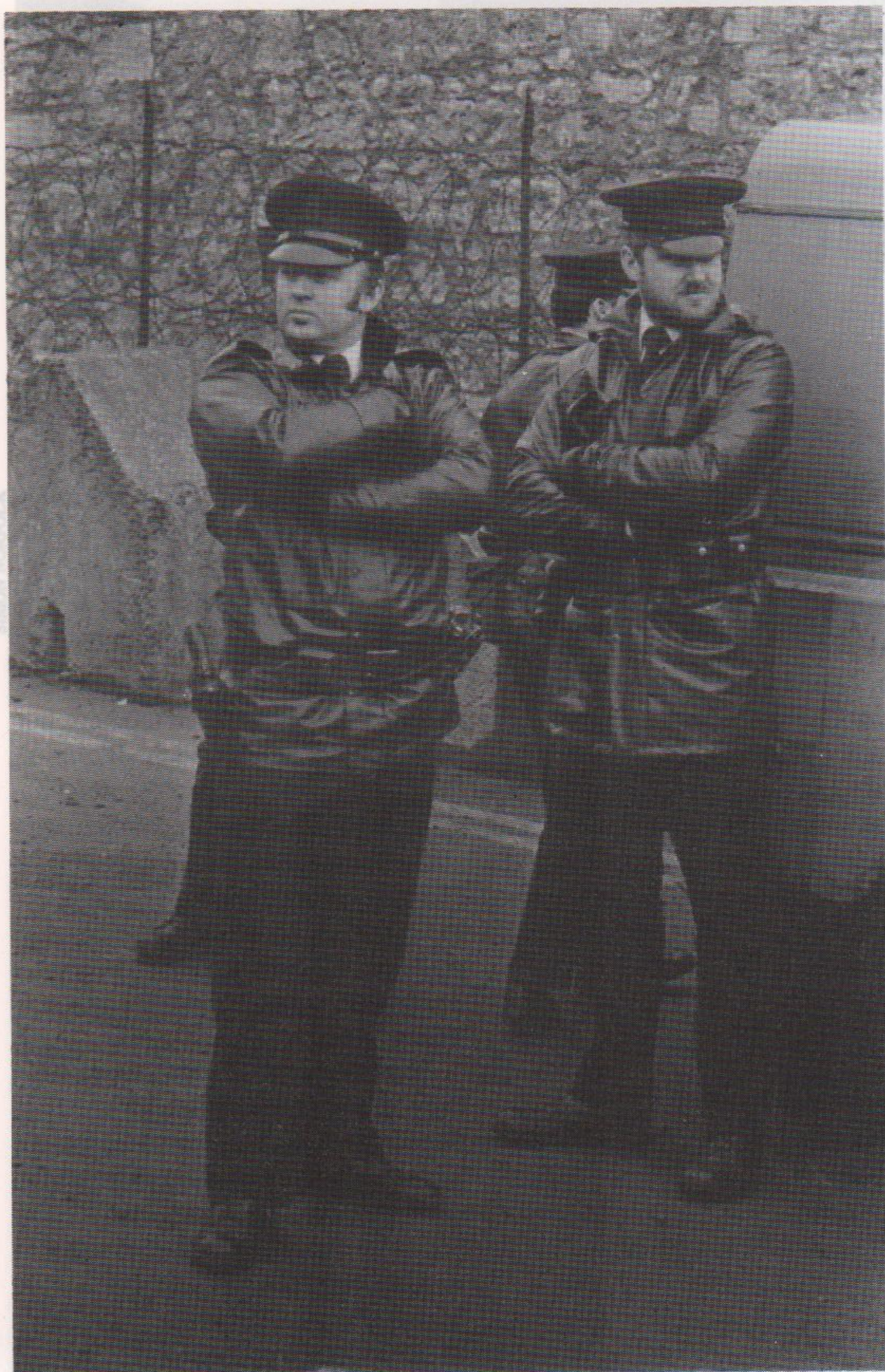
common sense will prevail among them.

In fact, Loyalist killers and the security forces work in tandem - their target is exclusively the nationalist community. Equally, the IRA is conducting not a campaign of sectarian killings but a war against British forces and their Loyalist allies in Ireland. If we examine the figures for people killed from January to August 1991 we can see that there is no basis for branding the IRA as sectarian, or for equating its violence with that of the Loyalists. Of the 25 people killed in this period, 16 were members of the security forces.

The real sectarian murderers in Northern Ireland are the loyalist paramilitaries. Britain has made the Protestants loyal subjects by guaranteeing them a privileged position over their Catholic neighbours in terms of jobs, services and political power. The Loyalists regard not just the IRA, but all Catholics as a threat to their privileges. They see any change in the status quo as undermining their position. Loyalist assassination squads usually operate indiscriminately because their aim is to terrorise all Catholics, and their victims are often chosen at random.

The stamp of Loyalist bigotry can be found on many of its victims. Throughout the 1970s the Shankill Butchers - a Loyalist murder gang operating in Belfast - carried out 19 brutal killings, in an area of less than one and a half square miles of the city.

Albert 'Ginger' Baker, British agent and leader of another terror group the 'Romper Room' gang, which operated in Belfast in the early 1970s, explained that the role of these gangs was 'to fit into the British intelligence plan to ter-



Loyalist gunmen in uniform

rorise the nationalist community and push off support for the IRA.'

Even the most sophisticated practitioners of British propaganda have not been able to attribute to the IRA the deranged brutality that characterises Loyalist sectarian murders. Even the most religious member of the IRA is of necessity anti-sectarian, as their goal is the destruction of the sectarian state which survives only through the institutionalised oppression of Catholics.

The recent upsurge in sectarian killings this year is very much the product of events in the Loyalist community. The marginalisation of Loyalist politicians such as Ian Paisley of the Democratic Unionist Party and James Molyneaux of the Official Unionist

Party has been made apparent in the course of the Brooke talks. Peter Brooke's refusal to cancel the 16 July inter-governmental meeting with Dublin was the last straw for many Loyalists.

Paisley and Molyneaux were forced to withdraw from the process in order to save face among their own community. Many Loyalists felt that their leaders were going soft. In traditional fashion Loyalist paramilitaries have stepped up their terror campaign against the nationalist community. Recent attempts to murder known republican activists are part of a well organised and on-going campaign of terror.

While the upsurge in sectarianism might be a reaction to the marginalisation of the Loyalists, there

can be no doubt whatsoever that more than collusion goes on between the British security forces and Loyalist terror gangs. The reality of this relationship was exposed in embarrassing fashion as a result of the Stevens Inquiry. The inquiry was set up after the sectarian murder by the UFF of Catholic Laughlin Maginn in August 1989. The inquiry discovered at least 2600 Army files in Loyalist hands, and despite its attempt to cover up the extent of the collusion between the security forces and the death squads, was forced to admit that the two often worked hand-in-hand.

Britain, however, is reluctant to be seen running banana republic-style death squads. Hence British spokesmen constantly denounce Loyalist violence. In a recent BBC *Newsnight* programme Hugh Annesley, chief constable of the RUC, was at pains to distance the security forces from any responsibility for sectarian violence. 'It is a pity the Loyalists have taken the stance they've now declared', he told the interviewer, 'because the only conclusion one can draw from that is that they will now enter the fray, and we can anticipate more obscene and offensive sectarian murders'.

Through their current emphasis of branding every killing as 'tit for tat' and the IRA as mindless sectarians the British authorities are attempting to portray themselves as 'peacemakers'. Through the policy of targeting active republicans the British authorities are attempting to use the climate of fear to gain a freer hand for their own operations. At the same time, by portraying the violence in Ireland as 'sectarian killings', Britain can ensure that the murder of republicans becomes less controversial.

Our aim is to show the truth about the Irish War. When it comes to Britain's war in Ireland there is no real difference between British terrorists in uniform and their freelance assistants, the Loyalist paramilitary gangs. In Northern Ireland, attempting to terrorise the nationalist community into submission is an essential part of Britain's war effort.

War and peace in Ireland

What price real peace?

Kevin Kelly examines the new peace movements in Ireland - and asks whether they could end the war

The British media has recently given considerable exposure to the establishment of two new 'peace movements' in Ireland. Stop Oppression and Pain (Stop) and the Newry Hostage Support Group were set up in response to recent IRA activities on both sides of the Border - the former after the execution of an IRA informer in the Irish Republic and the latter after the IRA ordered six criminals in Newry to leave the Six Counties. The two groups became the focus of a high-profile, well-orchestrated media campaign which conveyed the impression that the nationalist communities themselves were, at long last, rejecting the IRA.

Stop and the Hostage Support Group are the two latest names on a seemingly endless list of 'peace' groups which have been formed throughout Ireland over the past two years. New Consensus, Families Against Intimidation and Terror and the Peace Train Organisation all claim to represent a new wave of popular revulsion against the IRA. The thousands of people who attended the Stop rally after the shooting of the informer in the South and the high media profile given to the supporters of the two men resisting IRA threats in Newry gave credence to the claims of these new peace groups.

So, 22 years into the Irish War, have the nationalist communities begun to reject the IRA? Will these new peace groups grow in strength to the extent that the republican movement becomes so isolated that defeat is inevitable? To answer these questions, we need to look more carefully at the various peace groups.

Families Against Intimidation and Terror (Fait)

Fait was formed after a youth was kneecapped by the IRA in Downpatrick. Such punishment shootings for criminal and anti-social behaviour are widely accepted, and indeed called for, within the nationalist communities. In this particular case, however, the young man's mother, Nancy Gracey (a supporter of the anti-Republican Workers' Party) decided to use her son's misfortune as a means of promoting her anti-IRA politics.

Gracey's outrage at the 'mutilation' of her son by these 'gangsters' and 'thugs' turned her into a media celebrity. Again and again she has been wheeled out by the press and TV to call on all mothers to join her campaign and to defend ordinary people from the IRA. The media has remained silent however, about the fact that Gracey's son accepted his punishment and has refused to endorse his mother's campaign.

Despite the extravagant claims of the

British media Fait is run, not from the living rooms of terrorised mothers, but from the headquarters of the *Workers' Party*. Ironically, another leading member of Fait, Henry Robinson, was himself convicted of kneecapping a man while active in the Official IRA, before that group abandoned any pretence of support for the anti-imperialist struggle and became the *Workers' Party*.

The campaign, like all these self-proclaimed anti-violence groups, remains deafeningly silent about British violence. It has had nothing to say about the torture and harassment of nationalist youth by the security forces and, in recognition of this pro-British bias, Fait has won the moral and financial backing of the British government in the form of a £4500 grant with a promise of more to come.

Newry Hostages Support Group

When the IRA ordered six criminals from the nationalist Drumalane estate in Newry to leave Ireland or face the consequences, it expected little opposition. Three of the criminals (known in the Six Counties as 'hoods') packed up and headed for England. Enter the Fait bandwagon and the accompanying media circus. An array of middle-class politicians and Catholic bishops suddenly became the friends of common criminals in a desperate effort



The peace Britain offers is the peace of the grave

to present the IRA as the enemy of ordinary nationalists. In fact, the leading lights in this newly-formed group are interchangeable with those in Fait.

The British media gave great publicity to the 60-strong demonstration to Newry's Sinn Fein office. It was the perfect photo-opportunity - the three defenceless men pictured outside the Sinn Fein office supported by their families and friends, gloriously defiant. For Fait/Newry Hostage Support Group, this was a vision of the shape of things to come: ordinary people standing up and rejecting the IRA.

Or was it? The media conveniently ignored the fact that inside the Sinn Fein offices sat some of the real victims of British rule in Ireland: a group of women and children who had survived an attack by a Loyalist death squad on their way to visit relatives in Long Kesh. Also hard to find in the columns of the press was the public statement by one of the hoods, Hugo Brown, who gave himself up to Sinn Fein, admitted his involvement in criminal activities, and accused the Workers' Party and Fait of using himself and his friends for their own political ends.

In an attempt to regain the initiative, Fait agreed on the dramatic gesture of leading the two remaining hoods into sanctuary in Newry's Catholic cathedral. The striking image of these poor defenceless innocents peering through the bars of their self-styled prison cell was sure to have an impact.

In response, residents of the Drumalane estate held a 500-strong

march demanding that the hoods get out of Newry. This open display of support for the actions of the republican movement was largely ignored by the media - it simply did not fit in with the tone of the overall coverage of these events.

After 12 days, the hoods were led out of the Cathedral and into hiding. By this stage, even the most pro-British commentators were conceding that the much heralded local support for the men had failed to materialise. Indeed, Sinn Fein has reported a doubling in the sales of its newspaper *Republican News* in the area.

New Consensus

This is probably the best known of all the 'peace groups'. It organises throughout Ireland and in England. It can count among its supporters a number of British Labour MPs in addition to the usual array of constitutional nationalists and unionists from the North and South of Ireland. Well represented in this group are members of the two right-wing parties in the Republic - Fine Gael and the Progressive Democrats.

A prominent supporter of New Consensus, and very visible on most of its protests, is the Ulster Unionist and former UDR member, Ken Maginnis. This new recruit to the peace movement is famous for calling for the summary execution of republicans and for his comment in response to the execution of two unarmed IRA men. Loyalist

councillor Sammy Wilson also looks somewhat out of place on an anti-violence protest, having refused to criticise the murder of Sinn Fein Councillor Eddie Fullerton. Wilson called 5000 voters in North Belfast 'animals' for electing a republican candidate.

Stop Terror, Oppression and Pain

The IRA execution of informer Tom Oliver, a farmer from Cooley, just north of Dundalk in the Twenty-six Counties, sent shock-waves through this close-knit and relatively nationalist community. This shock and grief was quickly seized upon by a coalition of anti-republican interests who set up Stop. The main focus of Stop was a peace rally to be held in Cooley's gaelic football ground. Upwards of 2000 local people attended. The event was widely reported as a powerful symbol of a community's rejection of the IRA.

Fine Gael TD Brendan McGahon was determined to manipulate the community's grief for his own ends. Addressing the rally, McGahon called for the immediate introduction of internment without trial north and south of the border. Other speakers, including priests, urged locals to isolate and shun any neighbours or friends who were known to sympathise with the republican movement.



Nationalist people look to the IRA to fight for peace

Within days of the Cooley rally, another local man went to *Sinn Féin* and admitted to having informed on the IRA. He claimed to have been blackmailed and terrorised by local garda special branch. He had been asked to help set up a local republican for assassination. Brendan McGahon and the Catholic hierarchy all refused to comment on the case. Shortly afterwards the media were told that Stop was a one-off campaign and would not continue to organise in the area.

Peace Train Organisation (PTO)

The Peace Train Organisation was formed in response to the IRA's highly disruptive campaign of regular bombings on the Belfast to Dublin railway line. The PTO had some early success in mobilising middle-class students and moderate trade unionists. Its early stunts of riding the 'peace train' gave the campaign a high profile. But the arrival of the peace train in London recently showed that, far from building on this support, the campaign had been whittled down to a handful of old faces and old political interests.

The group has lost credibility through its failure to condemn the disruption

caused to people's lives by the British forces occupying Northern Ireland. When organisers of a campaign to reopen the border roads blocked by the British Army tried to get a statement of support from the PTO they were rebuffed on the grounds that PTO was a single issue campaign. Strange then that many PTO activists are also active in New Consensus, Fait and so on. In their determination to present the IRA as the sole source of violence in Ireland, these single issue campaigns have one single issue that unites them - their hatred of all things republican. Just to underline this point, the PTO has received a £8500 from the British government.

Britain's apparent success in stemming rising support for the republican movement over the last six years has given Westminster a new confidence in the ideological battle against the IRA. The fact that these so-called peace groups have received such prominence is testament to this. The last time a peace movement gained some influence in Northern Ireland was in 1976 when two mothers formed the Peace People in response to the tragic deaths of three children hit by an IRA car. The group staged some large protests but before long lost all credibility within the nationalist community when its organisers refused to condemn British Army atrocities.

The fact that the new spate of so-

called peace groups have not been similarly discredited shows that anti-republicans have a certain room to manoeuvre, especially in the Irish Republic. But, unlike the Peace People, none of these groups have won any credibility within the nationalist communities. Despite their considerable resources and their cosy relationship with all sections of the British and Irish media, the new peace groups have failed to mobilise the ordinary people whom they claim to represent.

So long as the peace groups can rely on the media to present a 60-strong march as a backlash against the IRA, and to censor incidents like the anti-security force riot in Warrenpoint, they are assured of a degree of success. But any hopes of building a mass anti-republican peace movement are likely to be frustrated.

The nationalist people remain adamant that it is the partition of their country and the military occupation by the British Army that causes the violence in Ireland.

Any peace movement that does not campaign first and foremost for the removal of partition and the British presence is bogus. The defeat of British imperialism is the prerequisite for real peace in Ireland. The real force for peace is the struggle to end the British occupation of Ireland.

The return of internment

Voice of the innocents

Joe Boatman reports on the British government's latest YTS scheme - in Belfast's Crumlin Road jail

This September, British prime minister John Major lectured the Chinese government on human rights, quoting at ministers an Amnesty International list of political prisoners held in China. Back home, however, his government has yet to respond to Amnesty's concern over Britain's latest political prisoners - the youth of the Ballymurphy and Beechmount estates in the Six Counties. One of them, Damien Austin, has become the subject of the first Urgent Action Order to be issued by Amnesty International in Northern Ireland.

JOE BOATMAN
In the last issue of *Irish Freedom*, an interview with 17-year old Austin from Beechmount highlighted the RUC's new campaign of harassment against Belfast's youth. Since then, the RUC and British Army have intensified their attacks on Austin and his friends. Austin has been rearrested and has had to endure a repetition of the kind of treatment he described to *Irish Freedom* in July - 'They slapped me, bent my fingers back, burnt my face with cigarettes. They pulled my trousers down and my trunks and tried to burn me.'

As we go to press, nine youths are being held in Crumlin Road jail. This new strategy of picking on vulnerable young people has led other prisoners to remark that it is getting to be like a YTP (Northern Ireland equivalent of YTS) Scheme in there. The nine face charges for actions they confessed to under torture. All have suffered the same kind of abuse suffered by Austin; one was so traumatised by the RUC's interrogation methods that he became paralysed from the neck down. He was left in this condition, lying in his own dirt and urine for 48 hours. But for the last



Damien Austin, British torture continues

minute intervention of the prison chaplain, it is thought he would have died in his cell.

Another five are 'on the run', scared to go home in case they are fitted up in the same way. Dozens of Belfast's young inhabitants - some as young as 14 - are now constantly stopped in the street by RUC and British Army patrols. The RUC acknowledge their innocence - while telling them 'you'll do' for a legal frame-up or a summary death sentence. It is the fear that they will carry out their death threats against Austin that has led Amnesty International to issue an Urgent Action

Order (UAO).

The UAO asks Amnesty's members and supporters to write to their MPs and relevant government ministers expressing their concern. Amnesty's press officer Anita Tiessen explained, 'We have no doubt that torture and ill-treatment take place in Northern Ireland. What has happened is not exceptional. In this case both the report of the police doctor and an independent doctor confirmed that Damien Austin's injuries were consistent with the torture he complained of'. Not that this is the first time Amnesty International has had serious concern about death threats, but 'in this case we can name one person who might actually be killed. We hope to play a preventative role'.

In Belfast, parents have formed a campaign group - Voice of the Innocent (VOTI) - to publicise and resist the RUC and British Army's latest tactic of systematically arresting young people and beating false statements out of them. Mary Nolan of VOTI told us, 'It's happening in Beechmount and Ballymurphy. We fear for all the youth in Belfast and the rest of the Six Counties. This could escalate into a form of youth internment'.

While two men in Newry protesting against the IRA received plenty of publicity here (see pages 12-14), the 200-strong protests organised against the British Army and the RUC organised by VOTI have not received mention. It is up to supporters of *Irish Freedom* to voice a call for urgent action - to get the murderous RUC and British Army off the streets of Belfast and out of Ireland now. That is how we can play a preventative role.

The UDR Four

Guilty of membership of Britain's war machine

Janet Sugden explains why the Irish Freedom Movement is not backing the latest campaign against British 'injustice'

Following the release of the Guildford Four and the Birmingham Six many people have turned their attention to another case of 'miscarriage of justice' - the UDR Four. These four members of the British Army's Ulster Defence Regiment were arrested eight years ago for the murder of Adrian Carroll, a young Catholic painter shot in the neck, shoulder, and head as he walked home from work in December 1982.

The murder was claimed by the loyalist paramilitary Protestant Action Force but eye-witness accounts of a UDR patrol in the area resulted in five UDR members being questioned in Castlereagh interrogation centre. Of the five men who signed confessions, one was later released and the remaining four were given life sentences at their trial in 1986.

The four men have always protested their innocence, claiming that their confessions were obtained through threats and violence. In January of this year, the British authorities reopened the case, Northern Ireland secretary Peter Brooke referring it to the court of appeal.

A number of Irish solidarity campaigns and pro-justice groups have taken up the case of the UDR Four and in so doing, have joined a vast array of Unionist and British MPs calling for the release of the four men. Unlike the Unionists, however, the solidarity groups, including many involved in the campaigns to free the Guildford Four and the Birmingham Six, have been careful to call these men the 'Armagh Four' and to present their case on its own merits rather than in the overall context of the Irish War. In this way, these men have become just another four innocent victims of an unfair British

judicial system.

The UDR Four may well be innocent of the murder of Adrian Carroll - the British state is quite capable of sacrificing four of 'its own' as a way of enhancing its image as a model of fair play. But the UDR Four are certainly not innocent. There may be 'reasonable' doubt as to their role in murdering this young Catholic, but there can be no doubt as to their role in the Irish War. All members of the UDR are guilty of membership of Britain's war machine in Ireland.

An editorial in a recent edition of the *Irish News* described the UDR as 'yobs with guns who in a more civilised society might expect to be in prison or a mental institution'. Formed in 1970, the UDR is the direct descendent of the notorious 'B' Specials and incorporated most of the membership of that anti-Catholic force. Ninety-seven per cent Protestant, the UDR has become



Thatcher praises UDR, part of Britain's war machine

feared and hated by ordinary nationalists subjected to continuous harassment, surveillance and beatings from its patrols. Even pro-British nationalist politicians like the SDLP's Seamus Mallon have been forced to call for the disbandment of the UDR, warning that its behaviour was pushing ordinary people into the arms of the IRA.

Earlier this year, Mallon and his cronies claimed victory when the UDR was absorbed into the Royal Irish Rangers. The skepticism with which most nationalists greeted the merger was confirmed when Sir John Wilsey, the officer in command of the British Army in Northern Ireland, welcomed the move arguing that 'This signifies the coming of age of the UDR and will mean ever more patrols on the ground'.

In contrast to the liberal approach of the justice lobby, the Loyalist supporters of the UDR Four are proud to ac-

knowledge the role of the four men in the Irish War. Ian Paisley Junior (yes his son!), who runs the campaign, sees the fight to release the UDR Four as part and parcel of the struggle to preserve the Union. His aim is to ensure that all members of the British security forces remain beyond reproach for waging war on those who threaten that Union. Many of the loyalist politicians who have backed the UDR Four campaign would not readily be associated with campaigns for justice. Most feel more comfortable calling for more shoot-to-kill operations against the IRA and welcoming the murder of unarmed republicans.

The IFM has no intention of campaigning for the release of the UDR Four. As members of the British security forces, we do not consider them to be 'innocent'.

It is vital that we understand the

frame-ups of innocent Irish people not as isolated cases of British injustice but as part of a deliberate strategy by the British state to terrorise the Irish community in Britain. We demand the release of all Irish prisoners in jail not simply because we want to fight for 'justice' but because we want to fight for Irish freedom.

Our support for the Guildford Four, the Birmingham Six, the Maguire Seven, for Judith Ward and for countless other Irish victims of the British judicial system stems from the fact that we take sides in the Irish war with the Irish people against the British state.

REVIEW

Their Connolly and ours

Fiona Foster reclaims James Connolly's message from those who would rather bury it

The Politics of James Connolly

By Kieran Allen

Pluto Press, £27.50 hbk, £9.95pbk

James Connolly, labour leader and instigator of the 1916 Easter Rising, features in two popular Irish ballads, once as 'the brave son of Ireland' and once as the 'hero of the working man'. It is this apparent conflict between James Connolly's nationalism and socialism which has informed many studies of his life and politics. *The Politics of James Connolly* is no exception.

Author Kieran Allen - a leading member of the Socialist Workers Movement (the Irish wing of the Socialist Workers Party) - boasts of being the first to attempt a 'critical revolutionary socialist' analysis of Connolly's politics. He rapidly distances his approach from that of other well-known books on Connolly, namely those by Desmond Greaves and, more recently, Austin Morgan. But anyone seeking a fresh new approach, or indeed a revolutionary one, will have to wait. Allen's main contention is exactly the same as that of both Morgan and Greaves: that James Connolly gave up on the working class and became a nationalist who submerged his work-

ing class politics in order to play a leading role in a republican-led rising against British rule in 1916.

Where Greaves applauds Connolly's apparent acceptance of the need for Irish independence in advance of any social progress, Allen joins Morgan in lamenting Connolly's political decline into pure nationalism: 'Quite simply the red flag was lowered beneath the green....In practice he liquidated his politics into the general nationalist movement.' But while Morgan blamed the demoralising effect of the defeat of the 1913 Dublin Lock-out for Connolly's 'decline', Allen focuses instead on Connolly's disappointment at the international socialist reaction to the outbreak of the First World War, which he claims was 'devastating for Connolly's politics'.

Undoubtedly James Connolly looked on in horror as former comrades and socialists abandoned their internationalism in favour of supporting their own ruling classes in the war. Along with Lenin in Russia, Rosa Luxemburg in Germany, and John MacLean in Scotland, Connolly was amongst the handful

of revolutionaries who practised their internationalism by arguing relentlessly for workers to use the signal of war as the signal of revolution at home:

'The signal of war ought to have been the signal of rebellion. When the bugle sounded the first note for actual war their notes should have been taken as the tocsin of social revolution'. More horrifying even than seeing international socialists adopting a chauvinist position in an imperialist war was the sight of Irish workers themselves being led into battle on the side of their old oppressor, Britain. 'They have volunteered to fight for an Empire that battered them and for the class that degraded and robbed them, Connolly noted in disbelief.

Allen is right to say that these events had a major impact on Connolly's politics. His assessment of the consequence of that impact, however, is entirely wrong. Allen claims that from this time, Connolly effectively gave up on building a working class opposition to imperialism. He argues that Connolly, desperate to use the op-

portunity of the war to strike a blow against Britain, looked to the nationalists as the only force capable of achieving this and submerged his political approach beneath theirs: 'Connolly's own instinct called for revolution while his theory led to pessimism about the possibility of working class action.'

Allen's contention that Connolly became a pessimist leads him to accuse Connolly of opting for a 'minority-led insurrection' in place of building a working class movement. 'Connolly's overriding goal of a minority-led insurrection', argues Allen, 'led him towards pandering to nationalist politics'.

murder each other in an imperialist war, he rightly recognised that working class politics, internationalism and anti-imperialism were in disarray.

The small working class in Ireland faced the biggest political defeat of his lifetime. Many of his labour and trade union allies had become, in Connolly's words, 'raving jingoes howling for the blood of every rival of the British capitalist class'. Tom Johnson (who became the leader of the Irish Labour Party) and D Campbell (a leading trade unionist) openly supported the war and moved to stop anti-war meetings. A hundred thousand Irish workers had already gone to fight on Britain's side.

Army: 'In the event of victory, hold onto your rifles as those with whom we are fighting may stop before our goal is reached. We are for economic as well as political liberty.'

As if accusing Connolly of abandoning the working class was not enough, Allen finishes his analysis by blaming James Connolly for the failures of the Irish left to this day and for the success of middle class nationalism. 'Socialists today are left with the obvious question', argues Allen, 'Why, if Connolly's tactics and strategy were totally correct, was the left so weak for decades afterwards?'. And again: 'Any assessment of why the nationalist forces won out so

'In the event of victory, hold onto your rifles as those with whom we are fighting may stop before our goal is reached. We are for economic as well as political liberty.'

When Britain threatened to introduce conscription in Ireland, Connolly and his workers' army (the 200-strong Irish Citizen Army) proposed a tactical alliance with the hardline section of the republican movement for the purpose of a rising against British rule. Allen argues that this alliance signalled Connolly's ultimate abandonment of the need to build a working class movement: 'Hence the key thing was not to wait to win over the majority of workers to insurrection, but rather to strike before the State was ready.'

Connolly's alliance with the republicans is seen as proof of his retreat from working class politics. 'Connolly's appeal to the rank and file of the republican organisations', writes Allen, 'reflected a further retreat in his politics.' In his determination to present Connolly as a degenerated working class leader, Allen has distorted Connolly's message and his actions to suit his own conclusions.

Far from giving up on the working class, James Connolly saw the rising as an opportunity to lay the basis for a working class anti-imperialist movement in Ireland. As Connolly watched the workers of the world march out to

Conscription, for Connolly, would have been a fatal blow to the working class.

In these conditions, and extremely isolated in his anti-war views, Connolly decided on the way forward. Far from being a pessimist who gave up on the working class, Connolly believed that a rising against Britain, while it was engaged in a world war, would show by example that workers' interests could only be served in an Ireland free from British rule.

Connolly's involvement in the rising was no act of despair in the way Allen describes it. He was aware of the weakness of the working class and of his political isolation, but he genuinely believed that it was better to try and fail than not to try at all. For Connolly, the threat to working class politics was sufficient explanation: 'The European battlefields of today provide the one and all-sufficient answer.'

Connolly had always argued that middle class nationalists could not be trusted to achieve real economic and social freedom for Irish workers. Contrary to Allen's charge, his view did not change and on the very eve of the Rising, he told the workers of the Irish Citizen

totally over the left must therefore look closely at the type of concessions Connolly made in his own day.' As Southern Irish society is gripped by the debate over whether or not to celebrate the Easter Rising on this, its seventy-fifth anniversary, Kieran Allen produces a book which would clearly assign this event, and Connolly's role in it, to the dustbin of history.

Call me optimistic, but I would have hoped that something calling itself a 'revolutionary, socialist' analysis of Connolly's life would first and foremost seek to emphasise and celebrate James Connolly's central message - that the Irish working class is the only force capable of achieving real freedom and independence for Ireland; and that if an independent Ireland is to be one in which Irish workers' needs are met, then it is the working class which must play the leading role in the anti-imperialist struggle.

This is James Connolly's message, the one message that all sections of the Irish left are loath to reclaim but the one message that can help reforge a working class anti-imperialist movement throughout Ireland today.

The John Major five point guide to really

quite
nice
national
liberation
struggles

ER...
ACTUALLY..



① A RETURN TO TRADITIONAL VALUES



② A COMMITMENT TO THE IDEALS OF DEMOCRACY

③ A DISTINCT CULTURAL HERITAGE



④ A PEACEFUL PROGRAMME

⑤ THEY'RE DIRECTED AT SOMEBODY ELSE.



REVIEW

Shoot the women first

Shoot the Women First

By Eileen MacDonald

Fourth Estate, £14.99 hbk



JOE BOATMAN

IRA women at war

'It is hard to believe that a woman who, under God, can give birth to new life, can be so twisted and warped by hate that she can bring forth death to an innocent victim.' This was Unionist MP William Macrea's reaction to the news that a female member of the IRA had planted the bomb that killed a part-time member of the UDR.

Shoot the Women First, by investigative journalist Eileen MacDonald, is an attempt to challenge this type of reaction to women's involvement in 'terrorism'. By interviewing a whole series of women engaged in armed struggles from Palestine to Ireland to the Basque country, MacDonald seeks to challenge some of the prevailing myths about these women: that they are abnormal, motivated only by the love of men, or brainwashed.

It is the women themselves who succeed in exploding the myths. Repeatedly they cite 'the fight for a homeland', 'the fight to get the Brits out', or 'the need to bring about a revolution' as their main motivation.

Many of them freely admit to having used the chauvinist prejudices of their enemies to suit their own ends, carrying bombs in their handbags and so on. Once arrested, though, they must reckon with the same torture that their male comrades face - and often to a lot worse.

The title *Shoot the Women First* comes from a piece of advice given to police teams when dealing with terrorist incidents. For the security forces, women engaging in political violence are all the more threatening for having broken the powerful stereotype of women as weak, emotional and dependent.

This book provides a rare insight into

the lives and experiences of these inspiring and dedicated women. But, as the book proceeds, MacDonald reveals the strength of her own set of prejudices and her comments frustratingly interrupt this otherwise fascinating series of interviews.

MacDonald constantly intervenes to remind herself and the reader that these women are 'terrorists': 'It all seemed dreadfully reasonable as long as one accepted the revolutionary reasoning and ignored the fact that they were subjecting human beings to terror.'

All semblance of liberalism disappears in the chapter on women in the IRA. Here MacDonald adopts the language of the most pro-British commentator when she describes the women as 'chilling' and admits to being 'more afraid of the IRA than any other organisation I'd approached'. Nothing to do, I suppose, with the fact that the guns of these particular women are aimed straight at the British state. MacDonald's claim to have felt uneasy with the women because she is 'an enemy by birth' will anger anyone who knows that the republican movement has long welcomed to the Six Counties any British person interested in finding out the truth.

This book will do little to challenge the anti-IRA prejudices of the average British reader. But for those of us who are interested in revolutionary politics and national liberation struggles it is compulsive reading. Like Mairead Farrell, who returned to active service straight after serving a 10-year prison sentence, many of these women have failed to be deterred by torture and imprisonment. Like Mairead Farrell also, they are prepared to pay the highest price - their lives.

Floyd King

Tuesday 25 June: Two RUC men sustain serious leg injuries and a number of civilians are hurt by an IRA bomb in Queen Street, Belfast.

Thursday 27 June: The IRA places a bomb outside a theatre in Hayes, West London where the Blues and Royals of the household cavalry are playing a concert - it is discovered the next morning after failing to explode.

Saturday 29 June: The IRA shoots dead Cecil McKnight in the Waterside area of Derry. McKnight, says the IRA, was a UDA/UFF commander in the city and had been involved in the recent murder of Sinn Féin councillor, Eddie Fullerton.

The INLA shoots dead one of its own members in West Belfast accusing him of being an informer.

The Queen visits Northern Ireland for the first time in 14 years to present the UDR with their colours at Thiepval Barracks in Lisburn. She praises this notorious anti-Catholic force for standing up to those who 'would do evil against the community'.

Sunday 30 June: The IRA places a bomb outside an RAF and naval careers office in Preston, Lancashire. It explodes as attempts are being made to defuse it, causing extensive damage but no injuries.

Monday 1 July: A British soldier is injured in the New Lodge Road, North Belfast by a grenade thrown by an IRA volunteer.

Wednesday 3 July: Northern Ireland secretary Peter Brooke announces that his talks have run out of time and direction, and that he is ending them.

Thursday 4 July: The main border checkpoint outside Newry, Co Down is attacked with mortar bombs - one explodes close to the accommodation area but causes no injuries.

Friday 5 July: A British soldier suffers blast injuries when an Army jeep he is in takes a direct hit from a grenade in the Turf Lodge estate, West Belfast.

A taxi driver from Andersonstown, Belfast is sentenced to several years for causing grievous bodily harm during the killings of two British Army corporals in Casement Park in 1988.

Gerard Harte has his conviction for

the killing of two Australian tourists in Roermond, Holland quashed.

Saturday 6 July: Loyalist gunmen break into the home of a woman from the Beechmount estate in West Belfast who two days earlier had been charged with making her home available to the IRA. The woman is out.

Sunday 7 July: Two Irish remand prisoners, Pearse McAuley and Nessian Quinlivan, shoot their way out of Brixton prison after producing a hand gun hidden in the sole of a training shoe.

Seven RUC men are injured in two separate grenade attacks on their jeeps in North Belfast.

WAR DIARY

Monday 8 July: Three more RUC men are injured, this time in a bomb attack in Dunmurray on the outskirts of West Belfast. The IRA triggers the burglar alarm of a nearby house to lure the RUC men to the scene.

Thursday 11 July: There are heavy gunbattles in the New Lodge area when IRA active service units, mobilised to provide protection against Loyalist incursions, are forced into firing at a mob of several hundred Loyalists attempting to enter the nationalist enclave. Having seen off the Loyalists, the IRA units have to rebuff RUC and British Army contingents which are trying to invade the area - gunfire exchanges continue for over an hour before local people and IRA volunteers engage members of the Parachute Regiment in hand-to-hand fighting. Later that evening, IRA volunteers fire 50 rounds at a massive RUC mobile and

foot patrol which emerges from North Queen Street barracks. The RUC retreats back inside and shortly afterwards three ambulances arrive.

Friday 12 July: A court in the Dutch town of Roermond throws out charges of IRA membership against Gerard Harte, Sean Hick, Paul Hughes and Donna Maguire. Harte is released, while the others are held for extradition to Germany. Harte flew back to Dublin where he was arrested and held for 24 hours before being released without charge.

Tuesday 16 July: Sean Hick and Paul Hughes are extradited to Germany. Donna Maguire appeals to the Dutch supreme court against her extradition.

Anglo-Irish Conference meets in Dublin - Ian Paisley comes down to demonstrate.

Thursday 18 July: Three RUC men are injured when an IRA active service unit throws two impact grenades at the RUC's Strand Road headquarters in Derry.

The IPLO kill a part-time member of the Royal Naval Reserve in Belfast.

Friday 19 July: The IRA kills a man from Cooley, Co Louth who, it says, has been passing information about republican activities to the garda special branch for several years.

A Catholic taxi driver is killed by gunfire as he waits at traffic lights on the edge of West Belfast. The man, Thomas Hughes, has been repeatedly harassed and threatened by British Crown forces. The day before, an RUC man threatened his life in a confrontation on the Falls Road. The shooting takes place in clear view of the British Army observation post on top of the Divis Tower.

Monday 23 July: A UDR soldier has a lucky escape when the bomb under his car is discovered as he drives into his barracks at Dungannon, Co Tyrone.

Tuesday 23 July: It is announced that the UDR is going to be incorporated into the Royal Irish Rangers (which has a minority of Southern Catholics in its ranks). The 'new' regiment will be known as the Royal Irish Regiment (RIR).

Friday 26 July: Three members of a British Army foot patrol are injured by an impact grenade thrown by an

IRA volunteer in South Belfast.

Saturday 27 July: Loyalist paramilitaries claimed responsibility for a series of firebombs which exploded in shops, pubs and restaurants in the Irish Republic, in Dublin, Dundalk, Dunleer, and Sligo.

Sunday 28 July: Northern nationalists win a significant victory when 1000 people join a demonstration by the Right to March campaign which proceeds from the nationalist Ormeau Road area to Belfast City Hall. It is the first time in 70 years that the British security forces have allowed nationalists to march to the centre of Belfast.

Monday 29 July: Adrian Hopkins, skipper of the Eksund which had been stopped by the French navy en-route from Libya to Ireland with a cargo of arms for the IRA, is sent to prison for three years by a Dublin court. One of the reasons given for the relatively lenient sentence is that he had been motivated by the prospect of financial gain rather than political beliefs.

Wednesday 31 July: Six members of the Parachute Regiment are charged over the killings of two teenagers, Karen Reilly and Martin Peake, and the wounding of Markievicz Gorman who were joy-riding in a stolen car. The soldiers have been charged with murder, attempted murder, and attempting to pervert the course of justice.

Friday 2 August: Four RUC men sustain serious injuries when their armoured vehicle, which is travelling along the Antrim Road in North Belfast, is blasted by a single improvised grenade device.

A man survives a sectarian murder attempt in Lisburn when a Loyalist opens fire on him as he rides his motorbike.

Saturday 3 August: Three British Army bases come under attack in IRA operations in Co Down, Co Armagh and Belfast. The IRA use grenades, mortar bombs, and an RPG-7 rocket. One British soldier receives blast injuries.

Fighting breaks out in the nationalist Short Strand in East Belfast in the early hours of the morning when a 70-strong Loyalist mob rampage through the area. Local residents come out of their homes and

eventually force the Loyalists to flee. **Monday 5 August:** The IRA fires on a car on the outskirts of the village of Cappagh in County Tyrone, killing the sole occupant. They later identify their target as an active member of the 073 Tyrone Ulster Volunteer Force.

A minibus bringing women and children to visit their relatives in Long Kesh is fired on at Loughgilly on the main Newry to Armagh road. Two women are injured in the attack which republicans suspect resulted from collusion between the RUC and the Loyalist death squad. Earlier in the day, the van had been stopped and the driver questioned about where he was going. It was then followed by an RUC vehicle until a few miles before the attack took place.

Friday 9 August: The IRA shoot dead a man on the outskirts of Derry, who they say was an active member of the UVF.

Three RUC men are injured in Ardoyne, North Belfast when their landrover is hit by an IRA grenade.

Saturday 10 August: Jim Carson, the owner of the 7-Eleven shop in the Falls Road, is shot dead behind the counter by Loyalists because his shop sold copies of *An Phoblacht/Republican News*. In claiming the murder the Loyalists issue a warning that any newsagents openly selling the paper will be targeted.

Sunday 11 August: Belfast sees one of the biggest republican marches for many years when tens of thousands came onto the streets to mark the ten years of struggle since the H-Block hunger-strikes, and twenty years of struggle since internment.

Monday 12 August: In what the republican movement calls a classic case of collusion between Loyalist death squads and British Crown forces, a Sinn Fein election worker Padraig O'Seanachain, whose personal details had been leaked by security forces, is shot dead at Killen outside Castlederg in north-west Tyrone.

Wednesday 14 August: A North Belfast Sinn Fein election worker has a lucky escape when a murder attempt on him goes wrong. While he is watching TV in his front room, someone aims a weapon at him through the window from about four

feet, but the gun jams and the gunman runs off.

Thursday 15 August: A local man is accidentally killed in an IRA operation against the British Army in West Belfast. James Woods walks into the path of a grenade thrown at British soldiers by the IRA unit.

Friday 16 August: Tommy Donaghy, a 38-year old Sinn Fein activist and former member of the IRA, is shot dead by Loyalists near his home village of Kilrea in Co Derry. He was interned in the early 70s and later did 11 years in Long Kesh, being released in 1988.

Hours later, 28-year old Martin O'Prey, a member of the IPLO, is killed by a Loyalist gunman at his home in the Lower Falls area of Belfast.

That same evening and early on Saturday morning, nationalists escape two sectarian murder attempts in the New Lodge Road and Old Park areas when the Loyalist killers' guns jam.

An impact grenade is thrown by IRA volunteers at a group of RUC personnel who are firing plastic bullets from behind railings in Belfast's North Queen Street.

Saturday 17 August: A British soldier attached to the Coldstream Guards is killed in a massive landmine explosion in woods near Cullyhanna, South Armagh.

While dealing with 50 hoax bomb alerts in Belfast, British soldiers and RUC personnel come under attack from the IRA. An explosive device is also thrown at Ballynafeigh barracks in East Belfast.

Tuesday 20 August: Hundreds of Crown forces personnel carrying digging equipment move into nationalist areas of Castlederg, Co Tyrone and begin entering nationalist homes in one of the most extensive search operations in recent years. They continue at first light the next day.

Thursday 22 August: Kilrea barracks in north Derry is damaged when a 500lb van bomb explodes outside in the early hours.

Two RUC men receive blast injuries when grenades are thrown at Drummurray barracks in Co Antrim.

In North Belfast, the IRA shoot and wound a man it says was a leading member of the UVF.



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