IRISH FREEDOM

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No peace without Irish freedom

Peace is peace



In depth: Loyalism – Britain's pawn

Censorship: The myth of the two tribes

Interviews: Judith Ward and Kate Magee

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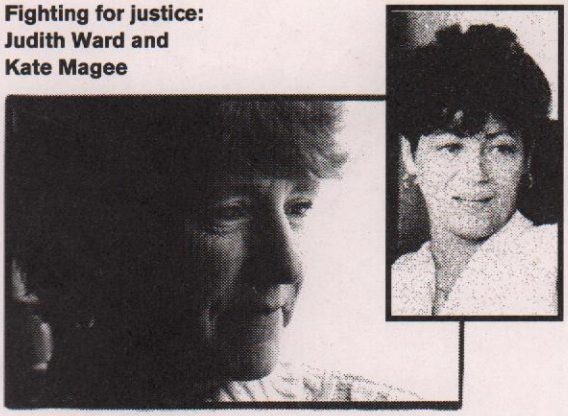
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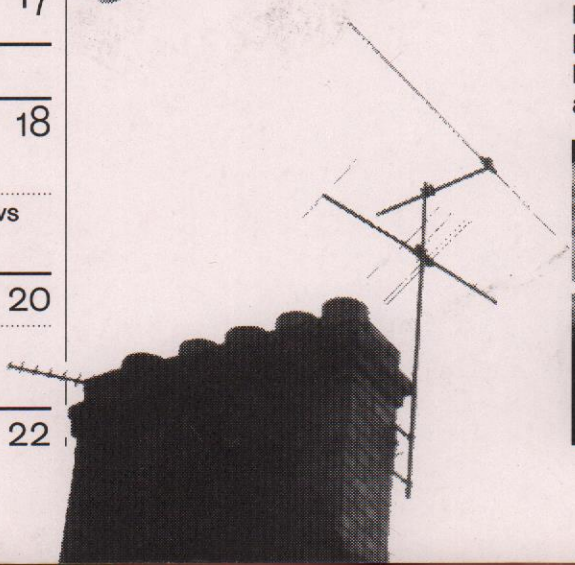




Loyalist murder gangs: by the British, for the British







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Editorial

WARRINGTON AND AFTER



The response to the IRA bomb in Warrington which killed two young boys was different from the reaction to similar IRA operations in the past. The widespread expression of grief had more in common with the atmosphere after the murder of Jamie Bulger and with the current British panic about criminality in general, rather than having a specific anti-IRA focus. The second new factor was the arrival of the 'peace movements'.

It is only human to sympathise and grieve for the tragic deaths of Tim Parry and Johnathan Ball. But what of the thousands of other victims of the Irish war? Why have these horrors not provoked the same response? Where were the crowds for the Irish children killed with plastic bullets by British soldiers? Why did these deaths not stir the nation?

The message from the media and politicians was that the Irish War was a struggle between the forces of good and evil, between British peaceniks and mad Irish bombers. Significantly, the Warrington deaths took place within the context of a manufactured campaign to promote a paranoia about criminality and social breakdown that has kept the chattering classes extremely busy over the last few months. Moral panics about crime, juvenile delinquency and negligent parents have seized the popular imagination in a very peculiar way.

These panics seemed to reach fever-pitch with the murder of Jamie Bulger by two ten-year old boys in Liverpool. The response to Warrington fits into this new social pattern better than the older traditional response to the IRA. The deaths of Tim Parry and Johnathan Ball triggered off a display of deep-seated anxieties and fears. People were responding to a general feeling of insecurity, rather than to the bomb itself. The reaction was more in tune with the outburst of emotions after the death of James Bulger, than with the traditional anti-Irish chauvinism after an IRA bomb.

What of the 'peace' movements whose emergence has been so keenly promoted by the British and Irish media? In their demonisation of the IRA, their crawling apologies for being born Irish and their promotion of the British state – the most militaristic in all of Western Europe – as a bona fide peace organisation, they have already compromised their pacifist claims.

On pages 4 and 5 John Fitzpatrick looks at some of the sentiments behind London's peace rally. The peace movement itself is not quite the spontaneous and popular movement lionised by the British media. It is closer to the official anti-republicanism fostered by the Dublin establishment and closer still to the embittered pro-imperialism of the Workers' Party and its offshoots.

At the biggest peace rally, in Dublin, Margaret Caraher from Cullyhanna, widowed by the British security forces, was pushed to the ground and spat on by the crowd. At the smaller London gathering, even the wearing of a Celtic shirt was regarded as sufficient grounds for expulsion from Hyde Park. Those with Northern Irish accents were regarded with suspicion and hostility. Clearly this is no peace movement.

The response of the Irish Freedom Movement is three-fold. First, we have to explain the real cause of the Irish war and target the British authorities as the source of the violence. The question that echoed after Warrington was 'Why?'. But no-one seriously tried to answer the riddle. Put simply, if there were no British guns in Ireland, there would be no Irish bombs in Britain. We defend the right of the Irish people to take whatever measures necessary in their struggle for freedom.

We should point out that Irish nationalists have no desire to pass on to their children an interminable war. There is nothing intrinsically violent about the Irish people. The British state, on the other hand, has never withdrawn from any colony it has been determined to hold on to, without an armed struggle. It has never shrunk from the bloody slaughter of its colonial citizens.

Second, the Irish Freedom Movement must resist the culture of moral panics that leads to a climate of insecurity and fear. We must alert people to the consequences of such a political climate: more state repression, more police powers, more censorship, more bans on free speech, and more 1984-style surveillance cameras.

Third, the IFM must counter the lie that Britain is a neutral arbiter in a war between two tribes. We must constantly expose the hand of Britain behind the Loyalist death squads.

You cannot build a peace movement if you don't ask yourself what is the cause of the war and set about dealing with it. Until the British-imposed sectarian state is dismantled, people will carry on fighting. Nor can you build a peace movement around a knee-jerk reaction to a single act of violence taken outside the context of that war.

Those who have the dishonest gall to present British imperialism as a force for peace in Ireland, rather than as what it is, the ruthless and violent aggressor, they are not a movement for peace but the advocates of war. For our part, we have a responsibility to expose their hypocrisy and to build a real peace movement which recognises the right of the oppressed to fight the oppressor – a movement built on irreconcilable hostility to British imperialism and those who knowingly defend it.

A REAL PEACE MOVEMENT

Every August since 1985 the Irish Freedom Movement has organised the national Troops Out march in London. In 1991 and 1992, after the Gulf War, we worked hard to broaden support – with some success – to oppose all British and Western military intervention overseas. Now in 1993 militarism at home and bloody interference abroad have become the dominant hallmarks of the 1990s. Radical opposition in Britain to imperialist intervention has more and more collapsed into its opposite – radical cheerleading for war under a phoney humanitarian disguise.

In response the IFM has decided to join with the Campaign Against Militarism in organising this year's march as a rallying-point for all those who stand for real peace against all and any British and Western interference in other people's countries. Who knows better than the Irish people the brutal truth behind Britain's pretence at being a peace-keeper and a force for civilisation? Join the march and anti-militarist festival on Saturday 7 August – and set about with us the building of a real peace movement.

Irish Freedom is edited by Fiona Foster, Kevin Kelly and Eve Anderson. It is written by supporters of the Irish Freedom Movement and is open to anyone interested in advancing solidarity work in Britain. If you would like to help, write to Irish Freedom, BM IFM, London WC1N 3XX.

WHEN A PEACE MOVEMENT IS A WAR MOVEMENT

John Fitzpatrick went to the Hyde Park peace rally and found that the peace people were warmongers

People were in small groups and talking in hushed tones. It looked like a larger version of the huddle that forms around the church door to greet the priest after mass on Sundays. The press said that 2 000 had come, but there were little more than half that number. On Sunday 4 April, Hyde Park witnessed the last sigh of the so-called 'peace movement' which gushed forth after the Warrington bombings. Orchestrated and promoted as it was by the usual media circus, opportunist clerics and every last reactionary politician in town, London's contribution to the Warrington, Dublin and Belfast gatherings was not the crowning glory the organisers had hoped for.

The movement which turned out to hear the Dublin housewife and the London Irish bricklayer was distinctly stalling. I arrived early and, without banners or badges, moved among the crowd, engaging whoever I could in conversation. 'Why do you think the IRA are continuing to fight?', I asked, as soon as I decently could. Heads shook, more in sorrow than in anger. Eyes focused on a quite inscrutable middle distance. Lips pursed with the sincere strain of having to contemplate such an unspeakable subject. Somewhere behind us a tuneless voice sang, 'The answer my friend is blowing in the wind'. Brows furrowed and mouths hung open as minds grappled with the strange query. When I pushed on casually with 'Why do you think that we didn't have these rallies when children were killed in Belfast?', the mouths closed and the furrows turned to creases of suspicion. Generally though, I was sent off with a smile. A sad one perhaps, or maybe a wistful one, but most of all a serene one. My questions did nothing really to dispel the sense of well-being, satisfaction even, which was wafting like incense over the crowd.

Throughout the country the shock at the tragic deaths in Warrington has undoubtedly been genuine, the sympathy for the bereaved obviously sincere. Yet there has been something obscene about the expression of this feeling, and it was summed up in Hyde Park. It is the self-indulgence of the response which is most disgusting. It is there in the lazy, sloppy notion that it is good enough to express sorrow about terrible things in the world and the desire that they should stop. It is there in the wilful refusal to enquire one step beyond the headlines of the last atrocity. It is there in the arbitrary and yet selective nature of the occasion for such an effusion. Arbitrary because it could have latched on to so many equally tragic deaths over the last 25 years. Selective because it was an incident in which the republicans are cast as villains.

For 25 years men, women and children have died in Northern Ireland, and some in Britain too. Do the righteous and the sanctimonious really feel that it is a sufficient response at this stage just to throw up their hands and declare that they have had enough, and demand peace. These people do not occupy the moral high ground. They occupy a moral swamp, wallowing in the warmth of their incomprehension, savouring the sweetness of their despair. They lack seriousness and they lack responsibility. They only really care about how hard they care.

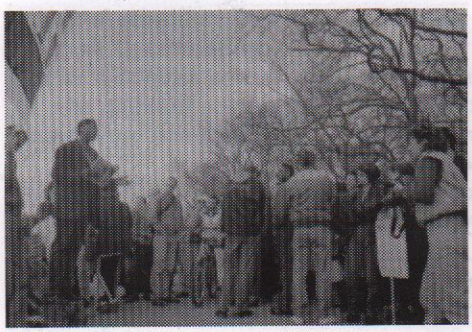
> In the context of the current phase of the Irish War their call for peace is in reality a call for war against the republican movement

Anybody who really cares about the deaths of the two boys in Warrington and the thousands of deaths in Northern Ireland will know in their hearts that mealy-mouthed pieties and professions of peace are really just callous evasions. Anybody who really wants peace, knows that they must first try to understand why there is war. How can they stop a process unless they know how it started, unless they know what keeps it going? Clearly they must identify the forces and interests which are at work, and they must decide where they themselves stand in relation to those issues.

Any ordinary person in Britain, who takes the trouble to study the British denial of democracy in Ireland and the British use of violence for the political end of maintaining a sectarian statelet there, will discover a situation which begins to explain all too clearly why there is a war going on. They will realise that calling for peace in the context of the current phase of that struggle is in reality calling for war against the republican movement. Calling for peace in this way is calling for victory for the Paras, the SAS, the RUC and the policy of shoot-to-kill.

In this sense, these are not peace rallies at all. They do not call on the British to lay down their arms and remove their soldiers from Northern Ireland. They are war rallies calling for the surrender of the republican challenge to the British state. Of course the so-called 'peace movement' is manufactured and manipulated to this end, not by the religious godfathers nor the spontaneous secular leaders, but by political forces which have always been firmly committed to defeating the republican movement. Those forces add vehement condemnation to the passive pleadings of the 'peace people'. When these people talk about 'stamping out violence', the emphasis is on the stamping.

In fact, the reaction to Warrington says much more about British society itself than



There

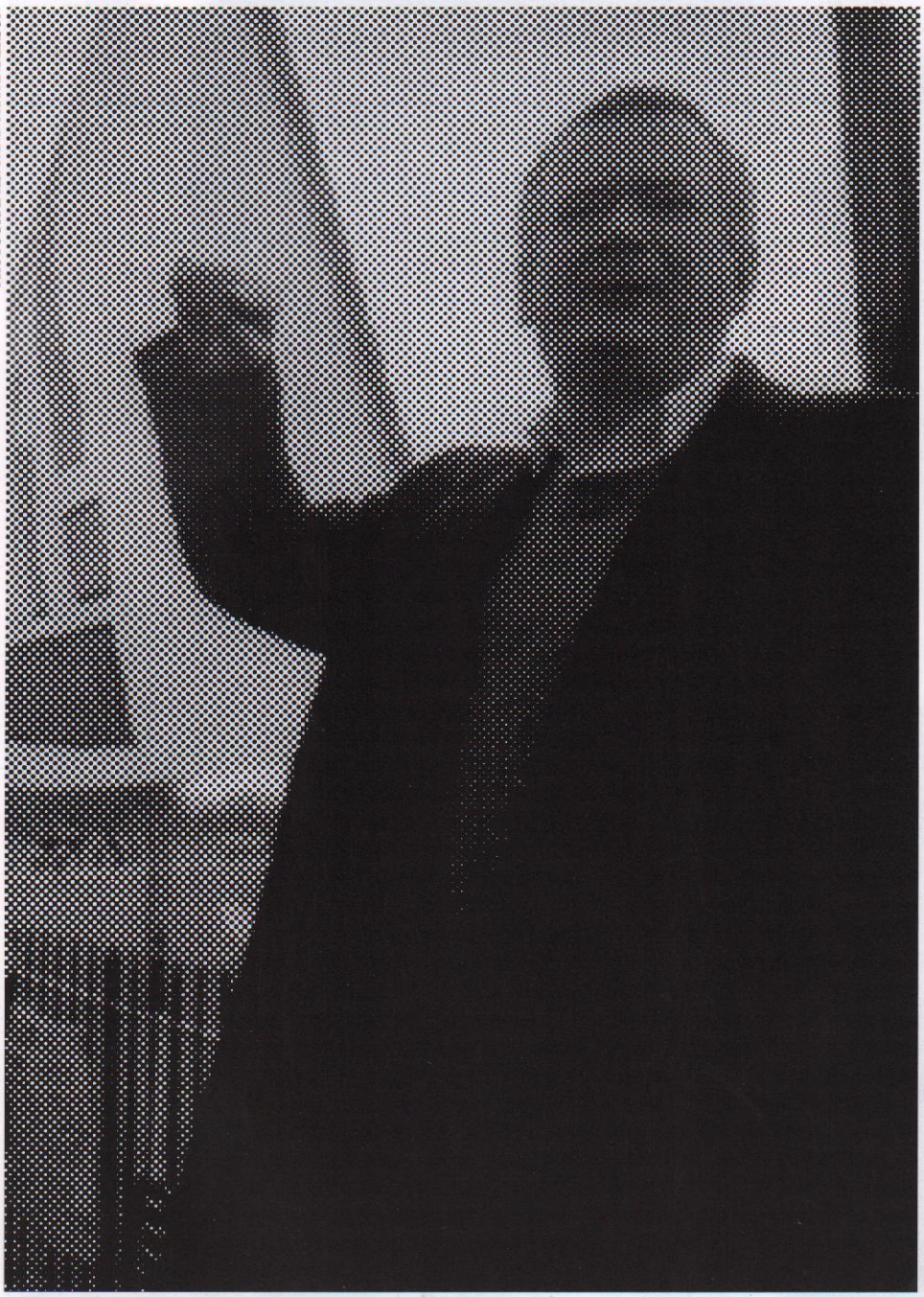


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no peace

PHOTOGRAPHS: PANDORA ANDERSON



John Fitzpatrick at Speakers' Corner – with an almost empty Hyde Park behind

it does about the Irish war. It reveals a brittle, almost hysterical culture. It shows an establishment not directly concerned to whip up a violent anti-Irish, anti-republican backlash, such as we saw in the 1970s after the Birmingham pub bombings. Instead they have concentrated upon stirring up anxieties and fears about all the 'evil' and 'wickedness' in the world.

The establishment and the media have suggested that events like Warrington are as inexplicable as the killing of Jamie Bulger. They have conjured up dark and threatening forces against which they appear to have moral authority, and in the face of which their security measures – from video cameras in shopping malls to armoured forts in South Armagh – seem no more than what is necessary. The so-called 'peace movement' has been a perfect vehicle for their agenda.

The Irish Freedom Movement spoiled the party of course. When we marched into the Hyde Park crowd chanting 'no peace without Irish freedom', 'troops out now' and 'Irish freedom fighters are not British criminals', we served notice that there is a section of opinion in this country which does not accept their version of what is happening in the Irish war and will not be cowed into silence. It was a crucial gesture.

We mocked the emperor's new clothes, the idea that a consensus now exists in which everybody wants peace on British terms. The media onslaught had been such that it was becoming almost a sacrilegious act actually to describe this vicious nonsense for what it was. Partly because the rally itself was so disappointing and partly because they spotted new demons, the cameras swivelled to record our protest and the newspapers were full of it. There is no doubt too that many present were genuinely surprised. Not only has somebody had the temerity to speak out, but they actually have a different view. They have seen nothing yet. That's a promise.



without



Irish



freedom

JUDITH WARD EIGHTEEN YEARS BEHIND BARS



PHOTOGRAPHS: MICHAEL KRAMER

Judith Ward lost 18 years of her life after being framed for the M62 bombing. A year after her release, Fiona Foster found her angry that the British establishment has got away with ruining her life without even even offering her an apology

Fiona Foster: During your appeal, the judges more or less agreed that you had been a victim of a conspiracy between the forensic scientists, police and lawyers involved in your case. Yet no-one has been sacked, or forced to resign. Does this make you angry?

Judith Ward: Yes, it annoys me a lot. To be honest, a lot of them have got away with it because they're either retired or dead. But they also got away with it because of the way the appeal went. Peter Taylor – now the Lord Chief Justice – was the junior barrister in the legal team that prosecuted me. He should have been brought before the Appeal Court, which would have caused great embarrassment and scandal, but they caved in quite early during the appeal so a lot of the evidence never came out.

The Appeal Court accepted that the prosecution deliberately failed to disclose vital evidence to my defence, but they claim that the senior barrister knew, the clerk knew, but the junior barrister – Taylor – didn't know. I don't accept that at all – they're just protecting him because he's the Lord Chief Justice. Anyone who's sat in a court – and I've done a fair bit of it – can see that it's the junior barrister who does all the paperwork, passing all the documents to the senior barrister – there's no way he wasn't involved in the non-disclosure.

It was funny recently when I got a personal invite to hear Taylor speak at the annual Dimbleby lecture. He came over as a real liberal. He even mentioned the Guildford Four, the Birmingham Six, and 'others'. Then he just ranted on about how judges shouldn't wear wigs. I was sitting there thinking, 'who gives a shit – it's what they do, not what they wear'.

I was dying to stand up and say who I was, but I'd been given a minder for the night. There was no question and answer session and when I went looking for him afterwards, he'd been spirited away. It just annoys me that he hasn't even had to apologise – I mean, everyone's got to say sorry some time.

Well, you obviously think the legal team had evidence to show you were innocent. Do you believe there was a conspiracy, or did the police really think they'd caught the right person?

Maybe when they picked me up. But within two hours they knew I couldn't have done it – but they carried on. It's really funny because I've had all this crap written about me living in this fantasy world – but if you want to see a real fantasy world, look at the way the police behaved. It is right in front of their faces that this woman could not have planted this bomb because she was 200 miles away at the time – but they ignore it and just dive into this fantasy that makes anything possible.

In prison I met Anne Maguire and Carole Richardson and I thought: 'the whole lot of us are an insult to the IRA' – Carole was a little junkie, Anne was a little housewife, and me some kind of nutcase. Of course, the police know enough about the IRA to know they don't use junkies and penniless women sleeping rough. I suppose they just think: 'we have to get a conviction no matter what' – and I was the 'no matter what'.

Do you subscribe to the popular view that frame-ups were a 1970s phenomenon and couldn't happen now?

Absolutely not. I don't think anything has changed. It's still happening now.

I saw you speaking at the Bloody Sunday march in Derry in January – hasn't your experience made you wary about speaking out about Ireland?

I tell you what – 18 years ago they terrorised me – they walked all over me. I didn't have a clue what I was doing. They can't do that now. I'll go where I want and speak to who I want. I went to Belfast last year to thank the people for their support. When I got stopped by the police, they kept asking me had I met Gerry Adams – so I kept saying, 'which one's he?'. Mind you, he ruined it once when he came up saying, 'Judy, how are you doing?'!

One of our members joined the IFM after meeting you in prison and learning about the politics of the Irish war. Did you convince anyone else in prison?

Well, I never talked about Ireland unless someone really wanted to know. If they came to me and asked, then I'd explain. My view is very simply that the British troops should not be in Ireland – I always say to people: 'Let's face it, it's not the politicians or the prime ministers out there, it's your brothers, your sons, and for what?'. When people say there'll be a bloodbath, I say: 'Right, OK, some people might get killed – but let's face it, the Catholics and Protestants managed to live happily enough together in Southern Ireland.'

Will your forthcoming book help to make sure the establishment pays for taking 18 years off your life?

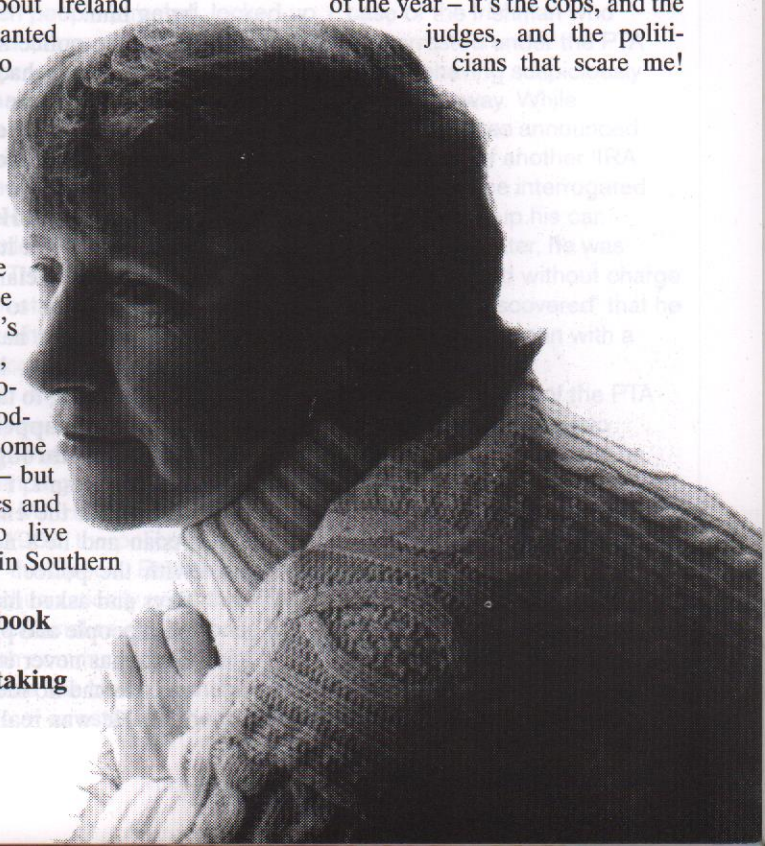
No. My book is actually about my experience of prison. But I do intend to write something at a later date about the conspiracy against me. I've got enough in black and white to make people sit up and think about certain people in senior positions in this country.

Obviously to some extent I've got to get on with life. But I must admit I got bloody angry when a relative of mine told me not to 'burn myself up' trying to expose the likes of Taylor. I said, 'This man and the police and the forensic scientists have ruined my life; they've ruined my mother's life – and they're getting away with it!'. I called him a complacent bastard. But that's the trouble with the English – they thought it was awful what happened to me, and the Guildford Four, and the Birmingham Six and the Maguire Seven – but they think it's all over now. We can go back to normal. But it's not all over; it's still happening. You see, nothing stops until people start shouting about it. We've got to start shouting, and pointing out who is to blame.

Do you think you can go back to living a normal life?

Well, what's normal? It was funny recently – I was asked to support a NATFHE [the further education lecturers' union] protest against cut-backs in the prison education system. I did 'O' levels, 'A' levels and a degree in prison, so I felt strongly about this. Anyway, the picket was outside the Home Office and after about five minutes the whole bloody street was cordoned off, there were cop cars everywhere.

We were in the middle of a bloody bomb scare. There was only about 12 of us and I thought, 'Jesus Christ, I don't like this, get me out of here'. And then this young copper hears me and says, 'Don't worry love, I'll protect you'. I suppose that was normal, but for me it was the bloody understatement of the year – it's the cops, and the judges, and the politicians that scare me!



KATE MAGEE
GUILT BY ASSOCIATION

Kate Magee has been branded a criminal and a terrorist by the British authorities. In fact, her only crime is being the sister of an Irishman who is wanted by the police in connection with 'terrorist' activities in Britain. Siobhán Ní Dhuibhir met Kate Magee recently while she was in London speaking at a meeting about strip-searching



PHOTOGRAPH: GABRIELLE HUMPHREYS

Siobhán Ní Dhuibhir: Can you tell me the story of your arrest in Derby in April last year?

Kate Magee: Well, Bobby – my boyfriend – had gone out at about 11.00pm to get cigarettes, but he never came back. So I was at home swearing about him, thinking he'd gone for a drink. And I was desperate for a cigarette.

Then at about 1.30am, the front door was kicked in. I come from Armagh, so I knew it was a raid. There was a spotlight on the house, a helicopter overhead. I could see armed police on the roofs opposite. My son Christopher, who is 6, had been sick all day and was in bed.

The police had been around earlier that day to ask me about my brother Joseph. They went off again, but they had seen Christopher on the sofa sick, you see. So when they came that night, they had a doctor with them. So they told me to put my hands up, and so on, and I said: 'I want to pick up my son; he's frightened.' They said: 'No, keep your hands up.' I told the GP that my sister only lived two or three streets away and gave him my sister's number in Armagh, but he never contacted them.

What happened to Christopher?

That is the worst part of all, and still makes me so angry to think of it. They wouldn't let me carry Christopher out because I had my hands in the air. The poor child was crying and scared and I refused to go without him. So after a lot of argument, they let me bring him.

At the police station I said goodbye to him and they had a solicitor there. I told him to make sure my son went to my family. I gave him the details, but he didn't do anything about it either, the bastard. He just gave Christopher to a social worker who put him in care. He was fostered for a week until Bobby got it sorted out and could get him over to Ireland. I'll always hate them for doing that to a child – the cruel bastards! He still has dreams now and if he sees the police, he says: 'Hide, mummy, they're going to take you away again.'

What had happened to Bobby – was he in the pub throughout all this?

No, he wasn't. I later discovered he was arrested at the end of the street. Bobby is Asian and he's never been in any trouble with the police. They held him for three days and asked him lots of questions about Irish people and places in Ireland. The poor bloke has never even been to Armagh with me. He had no idea what was happening to him. He was really shocked by the things they were saying about me and my family.

What did they say they were arresting you for?

They said they were arresting me for withholding information about Joseph, my brother.

What happened when you got to the police station?

They took me to a cell and introduced this man to me as my solicitor. He told me to go Queen's Evidence to protect myself and tell them everything I know about my family. He never asked for my side of the story at all, though I told him I knew nothing. So I knew his game and just ignored him after that.

I hear that it was 16 days after your arrest, at your second remand hearing, that supporters were finally able to let you know that they were concerned for your welfare. This must have been a very scary time.

Yes, I didn't trust the solicitor, and just said nothing, but I was questioned again and again. I was relieved once I knew Christopher was with Bobby and my family again. When I went to court the first time, there were armed officers in the court and outside. I was handcuffed and strip-searched before and after the hearing. The charges then were failure to disclose information, under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, and impeding the arrest of persons unknown, under ordinary criminal law. I was shocked, but kept cool throughout. They tried to say I refused food and all, but I just couldn't eat.

How would you describe the strip-searching?

It was disgusting and degrading. The first time, it was only a young policewoman who said she'd never done it before – she was more ashamed than me. They even strip-searched me after the visit from Pat O'Sullivan from the Irish Embassy, which shows what they think of him (laughs). There's no point in it, only to make you ashamed and degraded, that's all.

You were remanded to Durham prison – how were you received there?

Oh, it was great once I got there because Martina Anderson and Ella O'Dwyer – two Irish prisoners – were there and they looked after me. They advised me to write to Gareth Peirce to take up my case and sack the other fella. They were very good to me and I'm still in touch with them now.

I believe you were held in jail until mid-June when they allowed your bail application after dropping

the criminal charges about impeding arrest, because of lack of evidence.

What are the bail conditions?

For a charge of failure to disclose information, I had to spend three months in jail. Now I have to sign on at a police station every day until the trial. The trial date was set for April, but now that's been dropped and I haven't been given a new date.

How did you feel going home to Derby after your ordeal?

Well, the night I left Durham, we got back to the house at 1.30am and I couldn't believe it when I saw the state it was in. Bobby had said it was a mess, but everything was ruined, all the furniture was broken and slashed open. Even Christopher's teddies were all cut open and his toys smashed. The floorboards were pulled up and the walls were black and smeared with something. We're still trying to get it back together and are nearly right again. We had to stay with friends for a while.

How did your neighbours and the school react to your return?

Everyone has been very good. People were shocked, I think, at how I was treated and what happened to Christopher and all. The school has been lovely and helped him a lot. It's a very Irish area I live in and they have been very good – even the English people there have stopped me to talk about it as well.

There is now a Kate Magee Campaign of course, and what are your hopes for the future?

Well, Gareth Peirce is fairly confident that the prosecution just don't have a case and I will be acquitted, but I'm scared to be too hopeful, just in case. My other worry is that if they drop the charges or I'm acquitted, they might exclude me back to Armagh. But again Gareth is confident because of Christopher they wouldn't do that. But you can never tell with them. Christopher will be in Ireland during the trial anyway, no matter what happens. The Campaign is going well and I'm starting to speak at meetings about my case. We are getting more people ringing up for information all the time, so that's good.

● *Kate Magee Support Group, PO Box 158, Derby DE1 9NB*

● *A 24 hour answering service providing access to solicitors nationwide for those detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act is on 021-551 0503 run by the PTA Research and Welfare Association, PO Box 817, Camp Hill, Birmingham B11 4AF*

The Prevention of Terrorism Act

Under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA), suspects can be held for up to seven days without access to a solicitor. For those seven days, the police are not obliged to provide information to the relatives of those being held.

The PTA also allows for people to be excluded from Britain to Ireland or vice-versa – 'internal exile'. The authorities do not have to disclose any reason for these exclusions. The PTA proscribes certain organisations including the IRA and INLA, and also open expressions of support for these organisations – like wearing badges.

Kate Magee was charged under the 'Catch 22' section 18 of the PTA, under which people can be done for 'withholding information' – how do you prove that you don't know something that the police say you do?

Since its introduction in 1974, over 7000 people have been detained under the PTA, 350 people have been excluded, and only 226 were charged with offences under the Act. The vast majority of Irish people arrested, locked up and interrogated under this repressive legislation are never charged and have absolutely no connection with the war in Ireland. Well over one million people have been stopped and held for less than one hour under the Act.

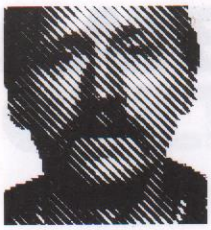
The legislation is used as a constant warning to people as to what awaits them if they do become involved in the Irish war or dare to voice their support for the Irish struggle.

Since the current IRA campaign in Britain began with the Mill Hill barracks bombing in 1988, the police backed up by the Special Branch have enthusiastically used the PTA to criminalise and terrorise the Irish community in Britain. There has been a continuous line of arrests with the police preparing 'frame-ups' with gusto. In November 1990, we had the Kilburn defendants – nine people arrested outside a well-known Irish nightclub in Kilburn. Three of those were released without charge, three were excluded, and three were remanded in custody on various conspiracy charges. Two were released before their trials (Siobhán McKane having been held in horrendous conditions in Brixton prison for nine months) and the third, William McKane, was acquitted at trial. In the period between March 1992 and June 1992, at least 40 people were arrested under the Act in the Midlands (only Kate Magee was charged) and numerous others were questioned and had their homes searched.

In January this year, we saw the arrest of Patrick Murphy who was charged with the Downing Street bombing. He was eventually released two months later, long after several people had come forward to say they were at an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting with Patrick at the time in question.

Recently there was the case of the Irishman who was arrested under the PTA after 'behaving suspiciously' on a motorway. While news headlines announced the capture of another 'IRA terrorist', police interrogated him and blew up his car. Several days later, he was quietly released without charge after it was 'discovered' that he was just an Irishman with a broken-down car.

The recent use of the PTA to coerce journalists into revealing their sources is an insidious development. Ben Hamilton, a TV researcher, was arrested and charged under the PTA after working on a Channel 4 documentary about collusion between Loyalist death squads and the British. The police continue to demand further powers.



Stan Woods looks at British efforts to extradite from America three of the 1983 Great Escapers

Extradition moves

An example of how the 'special relationship' between the UK and the US works was graphically illustrated on 3 June 1992, when FBI agents swooped down on Jimmy Smyth in San Francisco and Kevin Artt in San Diego.

A team of heavily-armed Feds also surrounded Jack Webb as he was about to leave his ranch in Sebastopol, California. Webb is a prominent San Francisco Bay area republican and owner of the *Ireland 32* pub, site of innumerable nationalist benefits as well as a very successful 1984 benefit for the British miners' strike. Smyth, a house-painter, had given the *32's* office number to prospective employers, thus giving the FBI its pretext for the raid on Jack Webb's ranch.

In San Diego, the FBI even utilised aerial surveillance of Kevin Artt's home for an unknown period of time, with one agent gloatingly showing Kevin an aerial photo taken days before the bust.

All this paramilitary effort to return a painter and an auto salesman to Her Majesty's penal system.

Readers of *Irish Freedom* are probably familiar with these cases, due to the sensationalist coverage in the UK media. What the Tory rags failed to mention was that Jimmy was one of the hundreds of victims of the infamous Diplock courts, charged and convicted of an attempted murder of a prison official, even though neither the wounded man nor his wife could positively identify him.

In Artt's case, after two murder attempts by Loyalist terrorists, repeated harassment and interrogation by the RUC, and being told that unless he confessed, he would 'go down the tubes...and never see the light of day', he signed a statement written out by the RUC. In it he 'confessed' to the IRA assassination of Albert Miles, deputy governor of Long Kesh, on 26 November 1978. There was not one shred of evidence introduced at his trial except his (by then) recanted 'confession'. Still, he received a life sentence.

In September 1983, Kevin and Jimmy were among the 38 political prisoners who participated in the IRA-led escape from the H-Blocks of Long Kesh. Smyth was a member of Sinn Fein and not the IRA. They both eventually made it to the US, where they led quiet lives, though both still sympathised with the struggle to liberate Ireland.

After approximately two months in a federal detention centre, Smyth was released on the astronomical cash and property bail of $1,500,000. The LAPD goons who beat Rodney King practically to death were, by contrast, released on a personal recognizance bond of $30,000.

However, in early 1993, Jimmy Smyth's bond was revoked and he is currently being held in San Francisco County Jail, awaiting his extradition trial, tentatively set for June. The defence plans to call Bernadette Devlin McAliskey and Gerry Adams as expert witnesses, provided that Adams, previously barred entry to the US under the McCarren Act, is allowed to travel to the US. Artt's extradition hearing is still unscheduled.

The support for Smyth and Artt has been strong, manifested by both the raising of the massive bail and the preparations to raise similar amounts needed for Artt and Pol Brennan (see below) if and when they too are granted bail. Packed courtrooms and outside picket lines are also planned for the upcoming hearings.

Another 1983 escapee, Berkeley carpenter Pol Brennan, was arrested at his home by a team of FBI agents on 21 January of this year. He is being held without bond at the Alameda County Jail in Santa Rita, California. Brennan was serving a sentence in the H-Blocks for possession of firearms and explosives. The charges were bogus for, while a republican, he was not a member of an active service unit of the IRA or INLA.

Like Artt and Smyth, living a clandestine existence kept Brennan from engaging in any overt political activity. But also like his two fellow fugitives, his fundamental views on the Irish war remain unshaken. In a commentary in the 31 March issue of the *Anderson Valley Advertiser* entitled 'Worthy and Unworthy Victims', Brennan strongly criticised the recent IRA bombings in England, stating that 'the events of the past week seriously weaken fair-minded people's perceptions in deciding where to apply any moral support to such injustices in the past, present and future'.

He went on to say: 'Perhaps this should be an opportunity for them [the republicans] to reappraise their strategy given that no apparent advantage is observable or any concrete ground gained.'

Despite these criticisms, he clearly laid the blame for the bloodshed at the feet of HMG. 'Northern Ireland is the Central America of Great Britain. It is a ... laboratory for the British military police intelligence community to try and test the theories of General Frank Kitson.'

The next hearing on a passport fraud charge is set for 23 April at the Federal Courthouse, San Francisco. No date has yet been set for the extradition hearing.

Free the Irish prisoners of war in North America. Let's strike a blow at the 'special relationship'.

● The H-Block Two Defence Committee welcomes all messages of support and financial contributions. The Committee can be contacted at: H-Block Defence Committee, c/o Jerri Webb, 2033 Hayes Street, San Francisco, California, 94116, USA. Or telephone (415) 387 4451. Make any cheques payable to 'H-Block Two/Committee for Justice'.

● For information and contributions for Pol Brennan's defence, contact: Joanna Voltz, 2111 Stuart Street, Berkeley, California, 94705, USA. Or telephone (510) 849 4020 or 841 2944.

HER MAJESTY'S IRREGULARS

Loyalist death squads celebrated St Patrick's night in Belfast by leaving a bomb outside the front door of the Orient bar, a Catholic pub on the Springfield Road in West Belfast. If it hadn't been for the bravery of one man who suffered serious injuries after lifting the device and throwing it away from the bar, many Catholics would have died.

This tragedy would have been added to the recent list of Loyalist attacks, like those on the Ormeau Road and Old Park bookies where eight Catholics were murdered or, more recently, the murder of four Catholic men arriving for work in Castlerock.

Hardly a week passes these days without another killing or attempted killing of Catholics by Loyalist death squads. Journalists have drawn attention to the fact that Loyalist killings in the past two years have overtaken those by republicans in the body count of the Irish war.

There have been few serious attempts to understand the causes of this upsurge in Loyalist violence over the past three years. Most British commentators have been content to present it as a feature of the 'tribal hatred' that has pitted Catholics and Protestants against each other for centuries. As such it is beyond rational explanation.

Others, like David McKittrick from the *Independent,* have concluded that Loyalist violence emerges from a relatively new sense of Loyalist alienation rooted in the exclusion of their political leaders from the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement and the subsequent emphasis on a role for the Irish Republic in any future political settlement.

It is undoubtedly the case that Britain's professed neutrality in the recent talks process has angered Northern Ireland's Loyalist community. When Patrick Mayhew's photograph appears on the front page of the *Irish Times* applauding the Irish Republic's football team as he stands in a Dublin stadium alongside the Republic's foreign affairs minister Dick Spring, he is doing little to assuage the worst fears of Loyalists.

In fact this is not the first time that Loyalist violence has claimed more victims than republican violence. In 1972 and 1975/6, Loyalist fears over political initiatives prompted an upsurge in attacks.

While commentators accept that in those periods there were no grounds for Loyalist unease, in 1993 many now argue that Britain has ditched its partisan approach and has adopted a more even-handed, neutral stance on the Irish conflict. When Patrick Mayhew announced a ban on the UDA last year, it was widely welcomed as evidence of a new impartial policy towards the Loyalists.

The talks process of the last few years appears to confirm Britain's role as a facilitator and peace-broker. The Unionist politicians have loudly objected to Britain's refusal to demand that the Irish government abandon Articles Two and Three as a precondition for talks and have called for more guarantees that the Union itself is not up for debate.

In fact this carefully crafted image of Loyalists being abandoned by a British government intent on facilitating peace in Ireland could not be further from the truth.

The reason that Patrick Mayhew can hang out with Dick Spring in Dublin is that the Irish establishment has openly abandoned the goal of Irish unity and clearly embraced the rights of Northern Ireland's Unionists to share the island of Ireland while retaining their right to be British.

The marginalisation of the republican movement has provided the British state with new opportunities to stabilise British rule. While Southern Irish politicians constantly reiterate their willingness to abandon their constitutional claim to the Six Counties, John Major and Patrick Mayhew have made it clear that the constitutional status of Northern Ireland as a part of the United Kingdom is guaranteed.

For Ulster's Loyalists however, any debate about the future of Northern Ireland is perceived as a threat to their privileged position. The lengthy and high-profile nature of the current talks process and the role given to the Irish Republic has heightened unease and uncertainty within the Loyalist community, which has provided the impetus for the recent upsurge in paramilitary activity.

Far from countering the activities of Loyalist death squads, the British security forces often actively collude with them. Nearly every relative of the victims of Loyalist attacks can tell a story about how members of the British army, RUC or Royal Irish Regiment either helped in, or did nothing to prevent these attacks.

The revelations during the Brian Nelson trial that British army intelligence has paid British soldiers to work within Loyalist death squads can be added to a mass of evidence that members of the security forces pass vital information to Loyalist death squads and often provide the guns and personnel to carry out the attacks with protection from interference.

A recent film made by Channel 4's *Dispatches* showed that the Nelson case was no one-off. It provided evidence that senior members of the RUC identify certain key targets and jointly plan their murder with Loyalists. It cited a number of murders that were jointly planned, like that of Belfast lawyer Pat Finucane.

While British journalists print stories from South Africa detailing how the De Klerk regime has sponsored Inkatha to launch attacks against the ANC, they turn a blind eye to clear evidence that the Major regime is sponsoring Loyalist death squads to attack the nationalist population in Ireland.

The current upsurge in Loyalist attacks is an integral part of British strategy, aimed at demoralising and defeating the republican struggle and strengthening British rule in Ireland. This policy also has the advantage of allowing Britain to present the Irish war as a tribal conflict and thereby popularise the idea that Britain has no option but to stay in Ireland.

Far from facilitating a peace process in Ireland, it is British strategy to foment even stronger divisions between the two communities as a means of strengthening British rule.

More people are now killed in Northern Ireland by Loyalists than by republicans. Fiona Foster argues that the British have used this development to strengthen their image as a neutral arbiter caught in a tribal feud



For the Brits, by the Brits

A PAWN IN BRITAIN'S GAME

Fiona Foster visited Tyrone, Mid-Ulster, and North Belfast to talk to people about the latest escalation in Loyalist attacks

People visiting the Fox household in an isolated spot just outside Moy in County Tyrone would simply have turned the key that always sat in the back door and walked in. Charlie Fox, at 68, and his wife, at 58, had not feared for their own lives since their two sons left the family home a few years earlier, after being informed by the RUC that their details had 'fallen into the hands of Loyalist squads'.

But one day the key went missing and two weeks later a Loyalist death squad arrived at the Fox home at 11 o'clock at night. Mrs Fox, who was in the kitchen, tried to stop them getting in the door. She was badly beaten before being shot. When Charlie came into the kitchen, he was shot from two angles. The bodies lay on the kitchen floor until 8.30 the next morning, when one of their daughters arrived.

Anthony Fox has never made any secret of his support for the republican movement. He knows that his parents were murdered as a way of getting at him. 'Loyalists often target the relatives of republicans. They hope that it will pressurise republicans into giving up their views.'

Anthony's brother-in-law was also shot dead by Loyalists last year while working in a butcher's shop in Moy. Shortly afterwards, Anthony was stopped by the RUC who told him that he had been the UVF's intended victim.

Far from feeling under pressure to abandon his views, the deaths of three of his family have made Anthony Fox more determined to rid his country of the source of violence. 'Republicans in this area do not separate Loyalist attacks from the British presence – they are part and parcel of Britain's strategy of drawing republicans into a sectarian feud by deflecting them from fighting the British.'

Anthony has good reason to believe that the British are using the Loyalists. On the night of his parents' murder, a white car containing armed men was allowed to race through a British military checkpoint without stopping. Of 12 police cars in the Dungannon area that night, eleven mysteriously had their radios switched off, preventing them from receiving the order to pursue the armed men. The car was not tracked down, and within half an hour Anthony's parents lay dead – their murder claimed by the Loyalist Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF).

Fiona O'Hagan – widow of Bernard O'Hagan, a Sinn Fein councillor for South Derry who was murdered by Loyalists in September 1991 – also has reason to suspect that the British security forces allowed Loyalists free rein to murder her husband.

Bernard was shot eight times by two gunmen as he walked across the car-park of the college where he taught. Shortly before the shooting, the road leading to the college had been swarming with British soldiers and RUC men as it often was at that time of the morning. Yet the gunmen walked calmly into the road after the shooting, apparently without any fear of being confronted by the security forces.

This kind of story is now so familiar that nationalists living in areas that are heavily patrolled by the security forces are fearful of Loyalist attacks when the soldiers and policemen suddenly disappear. Fiona O'Hagan is also left wondering why soldiers of the Ulster Defence Regiment were seen photographing her home two weeks before Bernard's death.

Fiona had never been too enthusiastic about her husband's decision to become a Sinn Fein councillor, not least because his predecessor on the council, John Davy, had been shot dead by Loyalists. But Bernard refused to allow the Loyalists' threat to deter him from voicing his political views in his own country.



FIONA O'HAGAN

When the children bent down to look under the car they were only imitating their Daddy

Fiona did her best to make life as normal as possible for their three young children, wall-papering the steel shutters covering their windows and painting the reinforced steel door at the front. 'When the children bent down to look under the car they were only imitating their Daddy – they didn't know what they were checking for.'

Dessie, a republican from Cookstown, Mid-Ulster, has received several threats from Loyalists, usually delivered by the crown forces. 'Over the last few weeks, every time we get stopped we're told the Portadown Express is coming for us.' The Portadown Express is a reference to a notorious Loyalist gang based in the Portadown area, that boasts responsibility for the murders of many Catholics in the area.

While being detained on a charge of disorderly behaviour recently, Dessie was told by an RUC officer that people with his views shouldn't be allowed to walk the streets. 'He stood there telling me that if they couldn't get anything on me, I would have to be killed. Lovely, isn't it?!'

Like Anthony Fox, Dessie views Loyalist attacks as part of Britain's strategy to demoralise nationalists and defeat the republican movement:

'The constant threat of Loyalist attacks is a community punishment fully authorised by the British. The British hope that instilling terror into the Catholic community will make them think again about allowing the IRA a base within their communities.'

Barry McElduff, former Sinn Fein parliamentary candidate for the Mid-Ulster area, believes that Loyalist attacks have merely taken over from SAS shoot-to-kill squads. 'SAS death squads were killing republicans in threes, in sixes, in eights – but they outlived their usefulness. The SAS was getting too hot, there were too many questions being asked. So the British have set Loyalist death squads up to do the job for them.'

McElduff argues that using Loyalist

PHOTOGRAPHS: STUART SHARP

death squads has the added advantage of allowing the British to present the Irish war as a religious feud. 'It looks like the Paddies are fighting among themselves and the British are only here to keep us apart.'

There is much evidence of direct collusion between Loyalists and the security forces. When Liam Ryan was shot dead in his bar in Ardboe, several locals reported seeing a carload of Loyalists being led into the area by the RUC.

Revelations from the recent Brian Nelson trial proved that British intelligence had done nothing to prevent the murder of many Catholics despite being made fully aware of Loyalist plans. It is now widely accepted that members of the security forces pass information on possible targets to Loyalist death squads.

There are other, less direct ways in which the authorities assist Loyalists in their campaign. People who are targeted for harassment by the police and army are more likely to become Loyalist targets. For republicans, being arrested on trumped-up charges can often mean a death sentence as well as a prison sentence.

Three men from the Cookstown area were recently charged with a new offence called 'going equipped for terrorism' after being found 'in possession of' a roll of insulating tape and a pair of washing-up gloves. Within weeks of being released on bail, a UVF death squad was dispatched to shoot one of them. The Loyalists gave no apology after shooting one of the men's friends by mistake, but made it clear they would be back for their intended target. Again, this scenario is now becoming a familiar feature of the Irish War, with the security forces arresting nationalists as a means of identifying them to Loyalists and the wider public as legitimate targets.

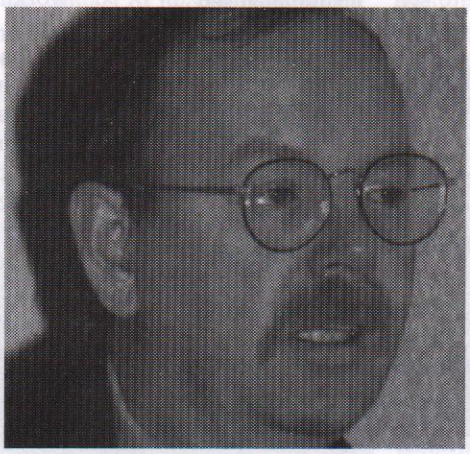
Belfast has always borne the brunt of Loyalist attacks with nearly 500 Catholics slaughtered in the north of the city alone since the war began. Gerard McGuigan – Sinn Fein councillor for the Ardoyne, a nationalist enclave in North Belfast notorious for the indiscriminate killings of Catholics – argues that his area is vulnerable because of its geography. 'We can't leave the Ardoyne without going through a staunchly Loyalist area. We have certain streets that act as a kind of border beyond which Catholics wouldn't dare go.'

The Ardoyne area is kept under constant surveillance by the massive tower on top of the local barracks. This allows the RUC and army to monitor every movement of this hostile community. Yet Loyalist death squads come into this area and carry out their murderous missions with impunity.

Said one local man in the Ardoyne, whose next door neighbour was shot by Loyalists: 'When the Brits stop me – which they do every day – they can tell me what time I went to the shops, when I left my daughter's house, they know my every movement. But they watch these bastards coming in here every day and shooting us in cold blood – it's sick.'

Gerard McGuigan has now been the victim of three murder attempts. Shortly before his election in 1989, he survived a Loyalist rocket attack on his office. Last year he and his family were sitting at home when Loyalists launched a grenade and gun attack on his house. And in March this year his home was again attacked. This time a home-made bomb containing glass and nails was thrown into the bedroom and exploded next to Gerard's wife, Rosemary, who suffered extensive blast injuries.

Yet, the Home Secretary and the RUC have refused McGuigan's application for a gun licence for his personal protection. McGuigan applied for the licence after discovering that a variety of Unionist councillors carry legally-held guns. Days after being refused a licence, McGuigan sat watching Ken Kerr, a rabidly anti-Catholic Unionist councillor, on *Channel 4 News*. 'As far as I know, there's never been any attempts on his life and he's got a conviction for firearms offences, and there he was brandishing a Browning automatic pistol on the national news.' McGuigan, who is an elected councillor with no convictions and three serious attempts on his life to date, has been left totally defenceless by the British authorities.



GERARD McGUIGAN

The Loyalists are just pawns in Britain's battle to impose British rule in Ireland

McGuigan is convinced that the use of locally-recruited murder gangs is a tried and tested counter-insurgency measure, employed by the British in Cyprus, in Aden, and in Ireland. He argues that the Loyalists are just pawns in Britain's battle to impose British rule in Ireland. 'If it suits Britain to look "even-handed", they will throw Loyalists into prison for 20 years.'

McGuigan echoes the sentiments of many republicans when he argues that the real conflict in Ireland is not that between Catholics and Protestants:

'We've got a lot more in common with the Protestants on the Shankill than with British people living in Knightsbridge and Fulham. When the British leave this country, there will still be a struggle, but it will not be between Catholics and Protestants. It will be a battle between the haves and the have-nots.'

Republicans agree that Loyalist violence is likely to intensify. It allows the British to present themselves as impartial observers of a religious war and serves to intensify the war-weariness and despair which it is hoped will persuade republicans to give up the armed struggle.

IFM members and supporters must relentlessly reject Britain's claim to be a neutral force in the Irish war. One way of doing this is by using every opportunity to expose the direct and indirect links between Loyalist paramilitaries and their British sponsors.

THE ENIGMA OF THE LOYALIST WORKING CLASS

While the recession may seem to have eradicated Loyalist privilege in Northern Ireland, Andy Clarkson argues that the material basis for Protestant loyalty to the British remains

Most of the one million Protestants of Northern Ireland are workers who appear to be exploited by employers in much the same way as workers in Britain. Yet their defining political allegiance is to the British state – the guarantor of capitalist social relations in Ireland. This paradox is at the heart of the enigma of Loyalism.

The majority of Ulster Protestants actively participate in Britain's efforts to crush the national liberation struggle. In return for their services they receive the real benefits of British patronage. In an era of mass unemployment, they get first refusal on any jobs going, or any homes built. They also get the lucrative jobs provided by Britain's 30 000-strong military occupation of Ireland in the RUC, Royal Irish Regiment and the prison service.

While there are examples of Catholics and Protestants struggling together, these rare displays of unity have been exaggerated by some radicals who promote working class unity as the way forward in Ireland. Within the apartheid state.

However, as a rule, Protestant militancy against the employers has been dissipated in the face of any upsurge in the Irish liberation struggle or any talk of minor concessions to the nationalist community.

Those who emphasise the prospect of working class unity between Catholics and Protestants are ignoring the material reasons why Protestant workers collaborate with their capitalist exploiters. Protestant workers haven't been 'duped' by their bosses or by the British, but are acting to defend their real position in a distorted labour market. This explains their terror of Irish unity and the limits to any real lasting conflict with the authorities.

How have the British been able to retain the loyalty of the Protestant working class through thick and thin for all this time?

Karl Marx described how two factors defined the wage-labourer under capitalism: the freedom to sell his own labour-power and his freedom from ownership of any other means to produce the essentials for life. This free labour market played a vital role in the emergence of the modern working class.

In Northern Ireland however, one issue has always distorted the formation of a free labour market – religion. Britain's provision of patronage to Protestant workers and discrimination against Catholic workers has placed a major constraint on the growth of a free labour market in Northern Ireland over the last 200 years. The distorted labour market that has resulted pervades every aspect and institution of Northern Irish life. In reality, the Protestant working class is not a working class at all.

Take the Northern Ireland trade unions. Trade unions are usually viewed as combinations of workers to defend themselves from the harsher demands of capitalist bosses. In Northern Ireland however, trade unions primarily exist to defend Protestant workers from other workers, the Catholics. If harassment and discrimination do not work, then pogroms and death squads finish off the job. Only after the Catholic 'threat' has been dealt with do the trade unions of Northern Ireland then engage in wage-bargaining with the employers.

Whatever else they are, the British are shrewd. They know an asset when they see one. Unlike the unions in Britain, Thatcher made no attempt to destroy the Northern Ireland labour movement. Indeed, the British government gives subsidies to it. In addition, it is the peculiar formation of Northern Ireland's trade unions that explains why Labourist party politics have never had any mileage there. Clergymen of the Paisley ilk are seen as much better representatives of the Loyalist working man than John Smith or Tony Benn.

The position of the Protestant working class in Northern Ireland should not be confused with the temporary advantages that some sections of the working class can gain in a free labour market. Male, white workers in Britain may on average be better off than black or female workers, but these privileges are always provisional. Fleet Street print workers were among the best-paid in Britain, but in 1987 all the forces of the state were brought to bear against them during the Wapping dispute.

The privileged position of Protestant workers in Ulster has not only lasted roughly two centuries, but has been intensified under partition. The informal 19th century arrangements for religious discrimination were institutionalised into the Northern Ireland state in 1921 for fifty years and more.

Although individual Protestants have contributed, often heroically, to the national liberation struggle, the mass of the Loyalist working class maintains its privileged position through the denial of Irish freedom. That being said, the Loyalist working class is not the main barrier to the national struggle in Ireland. They are in effect, merely agents for British imperialism – the central enemy of the Irish people. The vast bulk of the Protestant working class will only be won to progress after British rule in Ireland has been destroyed.

'NO' to the Anglo-Irish deal, 'YES' to institutionalised discrimination



ETHNIC CLEANSING IN IRELAND

In March this year the results of the 1991 census of the Northern Irish population were published. Richard O'Leary argues that they are a damning indictment of British rule in Ireland

There has been a lot said about ethnic cleansing in the Yugoslav civil war. The media-driven image of the Serbs hounding Muslims and Croats out of areas to be designated as purely Serbian has been met with revulsion by Western commentators. These scenes, they say, recall fascism.

Yet there has been no such outcry at the recently published findings of the 1991 census which shows that ethnic cleansing has already happened on the streets of Northern Ireland. Not one British politician used the words 'ethnic cleansing' to describe the finding that half of Northern Ireland's 1.5 million population now live in areas more than 90 per cent Catholic or more than 90 per cent Protestant.

British commentators like to argue that Britain's abolition of Stormont – a 'Protestant parliament for a Protestant people' – in 1972 marked the beginning of the end of anti-Catholic discrimination.

In fact, discrimination in employment has intensified with Catholics now two and half times more likely to be unemployed than Protestants. Far from divisions disappearing under direct British rule, the census shows that the degree of physical separation between Protestants and Catholics is increasing year by year with the number of segregated areas doubling in the last two decades. In Belfast 35 out of 51 wards (about two thirds of the city) are made up of at least 90 per cent one religion or the other. In other towns, like Craigavon, the two communities live apart in well-defined Protestant and Catholic areas. Overall less than ten per cent of the population live in areas where the mix is even close to a 50:50 ratio.

These findings have been largely ignored by the British media. Where they have been reported, they have not been presented as the tell-tale consequence of British rule in Ireland, but as further evidence of the tribal nature of the Irish conflict.

The *Independent's* David McKittrick, who made the census results the subject of two feature articles about 'apartheid in Ulster', made no attempt to draw a connection between British policies in Ireland and increasing segregation. Instead he quoted various local politicians bemoaning the tragedy of a society 'turned in on itself'.



Corrugated segregation – Britain keeps rebuilding the Border

Far from identifying Britain's creation and maintenance of a sectarian state as the cause of the divisions in Ireland, McKittrick suggests that the tendency of Catholics and Protestants to live apart is hampering Britain's attempts to introduce fair employment in the North:

'The almost apartheid-like state of separate communities makes the task of promoting equality of opportunity and fair participation in the workplace that much more difficult'.

There is nothing natural about the religious divide in Northern Ireland. The Protestant majority in the Six Counties was forcibly established by Britain through the imposition of an artificial border dividing Ireland against the wishes of the people of Ireland as a whole.

Since the Catholics living as second-class citizens within this Protestant-run statelet began fighting back in 1969, successive British governments have intensified divisions through a series of sectarian housing and planning programmes. Catholic areas, viewed by the British as potentially hostile, have been encircled by military checkpoints, army barracks and massive surveillance towers.

One Catholic housing estate in Cookstown, County Tyrone, has concrete boulders blocking one entrance and two permanent British army checkpoints flanking either side of the other. People living there cannot leave or enter their own estate without being stopped by armed British soldiers.

A Catholic woman quoted in the census report described her first meeting with her Protestant boyfriend's family. It became clear that she was the first Catholic they had ever met. She commented: 'They treated me so cautiously, skirting around anything to do with the troubles. They assumed I was from the Irish Republic – they just couldn't conceive I'd been born and brought up in Belfast.'

It is the British who have erected 15-foot walls dividing Catholics and Protestants in Belfast. It is the British who have ploughed massive financial subsidies into companies based in Protestant areas employing over 90 per cent Protestants. It is the British who have allowed Loyalist death squads free rein to slaughter Catholics.

To ordinary people the findings of the 1991 census make dismal reading. To the British they are a vindication of their tried and tested policy of divide and rule. The only British government source quoted by David McKittrick in the *Independent on Sunday* confirmed this:

'On the one hand general government social policy would theoretically favour a mix. But then security policy would probably favour a separation because it keeps things distinct and easier to control.'

The tragedy of intensifying division in Ireland should increase the urgency of removing the real force for division in Irish society – British rule in Ireland.

HAS IRELAND COME OF AGE?



Janet Sugden reviews the recent IFM dayschool which tackled the contemporary discussion of Irish history and its implications for Ireland's future

The calls for the dropping of Articles Two and Three of the Irish constitution, which lay claim to the territory of Northern Ireland, and the establishment backing for the recent peace campaign are both expressions of contemporary anti-republicanism. The arguments that underpin the promotion of anti-republicanism were first developed in the systematic revision of Irish history by mainly Irish academics.

The reputations of Ireland's national heroes, from Wolfe Tone to Connolly, have been overturned. The Easter rising has been redefined as nothing more than a pro-German plot. The impact of Britain upon Irish history has been minimised. The school of historical revisionism has been writing republicanism out of Irish history. It was with that in mind that the Irish Freedom Movement student society at North London University hosted its dayschool on historical revisionism, 'Has Ireland Come of Age?'.

The conference was co-sponsored by the University of North London Irish Studies Centre, where it was held, UNL Students Union, the *Irish Post, Fortnight* magazine, the IFM and the University of East London Irish Society.

The opening plenary saw a debate on contemporary Ireland between Robin Wilson, editor of *Fortnight* magazine, Ronan Bennett, author of *Second Prison* and Phil Murphy of the IFM, chaired by Donal Mooney, editor of the *Irish Post.*

This discussion set the agenda for the other debates; Wilson argued that Ireland had come of age, the border was irrelevant and that Ireland could look forward to a liberal, pluralist future by leaving nationalist politics behind. Bennett countered that partition had stunted Ireland and compared Britain's relationship to Ireland as that of an owner to its pet – still one of domination and subordination.

Murphy went further in explaining the context within which republicanism was being marginalised and pro-British currents such as Irish historical revisionism were flourishing. He focused on how the end of the Cold War had strengthened imperialism and weakened national liberation movements around the world, including the Irish struggle. He ended provocatively, by calling for fresh thinking to build a new anti-imperialist movement, since republicanism had hit a dead end.

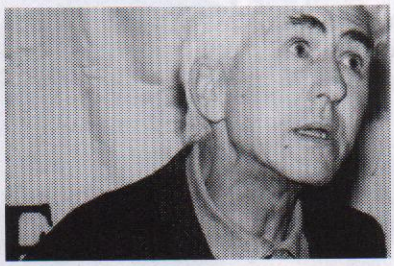
Two workshops followed the plenary. Both looked at various aspects of the Irish history debate and the speakers included protagonists from opposing sides; Austen Morgan from New Consensus, Father Brendan Bradshaw, an anti-revisionist historian from Queens College Cambridge, *Living Marxism* writer Mark Reilly, and Mary Harris, lecturer in Irish studies at UNL.

The final plenary, chaired by Mary Hickman, head of the UNL Irish Studies Centre, addressed the question 'United Ireland – an old-fashioned dream?'. The speakers were Henry Patterson, prominent revisionist at the University of Ulster, Brian Walker from Queens University Belfast, Mike Freeman from the IFM and Father Brendan Bradshaw.

As some readers of *Irish Freedom* will know to their disappointment, the conference was so well-attended that many people had to be turned away at the doors. For all those people and others who were unable to attend, the IFM are publishing the speeches in a forthcoming book.



Brian Walker



Fr Brendan Bradshaw



Henry Patterson

If you want a copy of 'Has Ireland Come of Age?' – the book – as soon as it is published, send an order to IFM, BM IFM, London WC1N 3XX



Fiona Foster takes on the promoters of the 'Two Tribes' theory

This tribal business

I think the first time I really noticed all this tribal business was in December 1991 when the *Guardian* printed a four-page feature by Kevin Toolis, called 'Kill thy neighbour'. Four pages of journalese on the Irish war is a rare treat even when you're trained to expect a built-in pro-British bias.

But this article was different. There was no pro-British bias or anti-British bias – in fact there was no mention of Britain whatsoever. It was like one of those games where if you mention a certain word you're out. Toolis was a masterful player, describing the British occupying forces as 'Protestant-dominated Ulster security forces'. He even managed to delve into Irish history without mentioning the forbidden word. Instead he created evocative images of two religious tribes driven by centuries of hatred and a thirst for revenge: 'In Ireland, history does not die...it returns from the grave to prey upon the living and demand revenge from the dead. In Tyrone's green fields, men mutter darkly of vendetta, unconsciously plunging between the centuries in mid-sentence.'

I had to spend some time rationalising why a hardened activist like me should get so annoyed by this article. Having done so, I concluded that the familiar pro-British, anti-republican reporting of the Irish War had the distinct advantage of identifying the British state and the IRA as parties to a conflict about the future of Ireland. Putting footage of IRA bombs into documentaries about shoot-to-kill or constantly describing the IRA as a threat to 'our' way of life may have been infuriating, but at least it allowed us to ask people to take sides without sounding like complete nutters.

Sadly Toolis's article was no one-off. In fact I'd be hard pressed to find any coverage these days which didn't reiterate his assumption that the Irish conflict is in essence a tribal feud sustained by historic grievances on both sides.

A year and a half later the *Guardian* ran another feature about the 'troubles'. This time it was an eight-page colour piece written by South African journalist Rian Malan after his first visit to the Six Counties. With a title like 'The White Tribes of Ulster', we already knew he subscribed to the 'tribal theory' and my god, he delivered it with a vengeance. Reliving his arrival on the streets of Belfast, Malan wrote: 'the instant you step onto the streets of working class Belfast, your nostrils are assailed by a reek of tribalism at least as pungent as any I ever sniffed in South Africa'.

Malan concludes that the troubles will never end because decades of sectarian tension have turned places like Belfast into an 'insane asylum, full of people with nervous tics and trembling hands and eyes that gleam paranoically'. Characteristically amongst the tribal theory types, Malan pays scant regard to Britain's role, except to exonerate her: 'Whitehall is not oppressing or exploiting the Catholics of Ulster.'

While the 'pungent reek of tribalism' clearly makes good copy for feature writers, this tribalism business is by no means confined to them. There are now few politicians and commentators who don't present the troubles as resulting from the irreconcilable views of Northern Ireland's Catholic and Protestant communities. To be modern and mature about the Irish situation nowadays you must first acknowledge that there are two traditions co-existing on one island. They are both valid and have the right to expression. They have a separate history, a separate culture, a separate identity – they are in effect two tribes and we must embrace them both.

These views were clearly articulated by a series of speakers at the IFM's dayschool on the anti-nationalist revision of Irish history (see page 20). What struck me that day was how the revisionists, the anti-revisionists and the Toolis/Malan types all agreed on one thing – that the conflict in Ireland today finds its roots in centuries of struggle.

Not for the first time I thought of Yugoslavia where, prior to the end of the Cold War, Serbs lived next door to Croats who lived next door to Muslims without any apparent problem. Yet since the outbreak of the civil war, we are told that the violence springs from centuries of tribal enmity between the three factions.

The message of the tribal theory is two-fold. Firstly, the motivation for the IRA's armed struggle cannot be found in Ireland today; it can only be understood in the realms of history, tradition and the peculiar psyche of religious extremists. Secondly, the British state is irrelevant to the current fighting in Ireland except as a neutral force attempting to prevent the worst excesses of both sides.

Ask people in Britain to take sides in the Irish War and they'll more than likely tell you they're not interested in religion.

The big irony of all this is that the only people consistently rejecting the tribal theory are the people who support the national liberation struggle in Ireland. They are the only force left in Ireland which refuses to accept that Catholics and Protestants are irreconcilable. Their vision of Irish society is not of two tribes co-existing but of one people progressing together. As Sinn Fein's Gerard McGuigan says elsewhere in this magazine, when the British get out of Ireland, religious divisions will disappear, and if there is a struggle in Ireland it'll be between the haves and have-nots.

The IRA volunteer of today may sing about Wolfe Tone over his or her pint but what makes them risk their lives is evident to anyone who chooses to see it. Among their reasons is a determination to rid their country of the divisions which are now providing the tribal theorists with so many column inches.

IRELAND AND A NEW PHASE OF CENSORSHIP

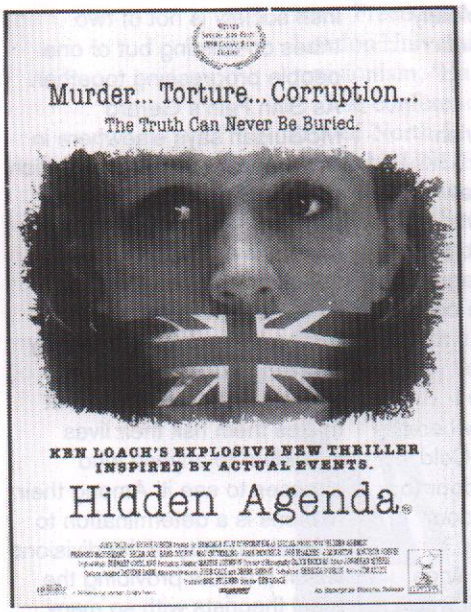
Claire Foster examines the increased news coverage of the recent IRA bombings and warns that more news does not mean less censorship

On Mothering Sunday, the day after the Warrington bomb, Channel 4 took the decision to 'pull' Ken Loach's film on shoot-to-kill. *Hidden Agenda* became a victim of self-censorship as did, more obscurely, an apolitical film, *Angel*. Its only offence seems to have been the fact that it was set in Ireland.

Two weeks later, Alan Yentob from the BBC put out a grovelling statement of apology for showing a *Rough Justice* documentary which argued that one of the Casement Park convictions was unsafe. Apparently this had been insensitive as it was shown on the same day as the funeral of Tim Parry, the 12-year old boy killed in Warrington.

Should we be surprised? After all, censorship of the Irish war has been intensive and constant over the last 23 years. But it would be misleading to draw the conclusion that this episode in self-censorship smacks of more of the same. In fact media treatment of the Irish war has entered a new phase and censorship is taking a new form.

Channel 4's decision to postpone the films in question was not due to direct government intervention. It was not John Major but rather the *Sun* which demanded that the BBC apologise for showing their uncontentious documentary on another miscarriage of justice. The BBC duly obliged. This illustrates the spineless subservience that has entered the media world as it abandons any notions of investigative journalism or pretence of objectivity. What has changed is that there is now less need for overt government censorship because the media are censoring themselves.



There is now less need for overt censorship because the media are censoring themselves

While Ireland has always been an openly censored subject, there were attempts in the past at putting up a liberal challenge to Whitehall propaganda. Documentaries such as *Death on the Rock* challenged the official version of the assassination of the three IRA volunteers in Gibraltar and sent ripples of disquiet among the powers that be. While such programmes barely dented the accepted view of the war, they at least asked a few awkward questions, enough to lead to official attempts to suppress them.

In these instances the media were, eccentrically, accused of pro-IRA bias. But no such accusations need be levelled today. The media have taken to faithfully reproducing an uncritical retelling of the Irish War, with no questions asked.

In the past it was also the case that censorship tended to mean that Ireland rarely got a mention in the media, except in the hysterical coverage of bombings in Britain. More recently we appear to have been subjected to an unprecedented over-exposure to news about the war. But it is in the character of what is said, rather than what is not said, that lies the novel but dangerous type of censorship. In 1993 we can expect more censorship by distortion and selective presentation.

The media's role in promoting Whitehall's agenda can be seen in its coverage of the Peace '93 initiative sparked off by the Warrington bombings. The peace pundits were presented as genuine Irish grassroots opposition to republicanism. Vast quantities of air-time and features in all the newspapers have been devoted to congratulating and canonising Susan McHugh and Senator Gordon Wilson. But the selective concern to mourn only certain children (those killed by 'terrorists') and the selective denunciations of only one type of violence (that of republicans) have gone unquestioned.

The one-sided political character of the new peace initiative and its manipulation by both the London and Dublin governments go unchallenged. Journalists did not even make the most banal enquiries. Is it really likely that ordinary housewives have taken to addressing mass rallies? And if so, who are their PR agents?

Taking Peace '93 at face value and not even daring to scratch the surface meant that the media gave the impression that these initiatives were a spontaneous outburst of remorse by ordinary folk everywhere. In fact it was the media which gave momentum to the movement, promoting rallies and demonstrations through prime-time news adverts.

On the day, the largest rally within the 'British isles' was the one organised in Belfast by Relatives for Justice, with an attendance well in excess of 10 000 people. This was either ignored or the figures cut by four-fifths. Instead, prominence was given to the London version with scant attention to the actual low turn-out from ordinary people, as only just over one thousand people huddled in a corner of Hyde Park, singing hymns.

This censorship-by-selection is well illustrated by another feature of the post-



There is no good censorship

We must be on our guard to oppose any attempts to legitimise the increasingly censorious atmosphere. Radicals have the bad habit of calling for selective censorship. For example, over the years it has been the left which has campaigned to censor pornography. This has given the moral high ground to the likes of Mary Whitehouse and created opportunities for government-sponsored moral panics about 'foreign' satellite TV porn such as Red Hot Dutch, or campaigns against sex and violence on TV.

Unfortunately, the left continues to play into the hands of the state censors. Recently we have witnessed the unsavoury spectacle of the Anti Nazi League calling for a ban on the new film *Romper Stomper* because it depicts racist thugs in too positive a light. On this basis, any positive depiction of, for example, republican youth, would be banned by the state. Indeed the *Real Lives* documentary of 1987 was censored precisely because Martin McGuinness was portrayed as too reasonable a man.

A similar censorious sentiment was whipped up by so-called radicals when they called on the British state to ban and deport American members of the vicious anti-abortion group Operation Rescue. This small bunch of bigots is more of an irrelevance than a significant menace. But in a period of intensified repression, any legitimation of the state's right to deport whomsoever it wishes is extremely dangerous. If we allow the state to deport Donald Treshman on the basis that he is violent and anti-women, it will have few problems justifying the deportation of Sinn Fein members on the grounds that they are violent child-killers.

Allowing any form of censorship or state bans gives the establishment a carte blanche to vet what is or isn't good for us and to censor anything they consider may have a detrimental effect. This creates an atmosphere of moral repression, while at the same time making censorship appear as a reasonable mechanism for protecting us all.

The lack of critical journalism these days is forcefully indicated by the unquestioned remodelling of the Irish conflict along the lines laid down by a more strident international imperialism. Rudyard Kipling-style arguments asserting the moral superiority of the great powers over the third world are back in vogue.

The *Guardian Weekend* (3 April 1993) reproduced an article from *Esquire* magazine that summed up this new trend. Rian Malan's feature on Northern Ireland avoided many of the old cliches. What is more, he spoke to all sides. No censorship of Sinn Fein here. But what the article did contain were the new post-Cold War political prejudices that have reduced the third world and oppressed countries to a seething mass of backward tribes.

Malan codified the new media angle in his presentation of the Irish conflict as being 'tribal warfare'. He put the Irish War into the category of just one more of the many 'conflicts between tribes and among small nations – 189 such conflicts [world-wide] and breaking out daily'.

Ireland is placed into the new mythical world of 'tribal darkness' that is now used to justify enlightened intervention by the non-tribal civilised West. This is censorship by any other name, as quotes from all sides are used selectively by Malan to back up his thesis.

Warrington coverage. Front pages reproduced word for word the transcript of the extremely moving funeral oration by Timothy Parry's father. The nation wept. We all wept. As we would if we were to read any relative's heart-felt intimate thoughts on the loss of a loved one. Meanwhile, six Catholics butchered by Loyalist murder gangs were relegated to page five. Their deaths were reduced to non-significance and their murderers were spared the media's bitter condemnations. The press did not print their relatives' poignant farewell addresses. The nation did not weep. Indeed they did not know. There was no government suppression of this information but the media duly obliged, telling the lie by omission.

Today, censorship does not necessarily mean the suppression of any discussion on the war, but rather an absence of any critical discussion. If anything, Ireland seems high on the newsworthy agenda. But more coverage does not mean less censorship.

Take the news bulletins on all channels on Easter Sunday. In light of the ban on Sinn Fein, it may have seemed remarkable that they showed an IRA propaganda video. Usually such statements by republicans are suppressed.

However this 'uncensored' showing was used to depict republicans as men of war in contrast to the peace movements. No mention now that showing IRA active service units might be 'insensitive' to 'victims of terrorism'. Indeed, the coverage highlighted the more military manifestations of republicanism at the Easter Sunday commemoration marches in the Six Counties. The message was clear – here are the uncensored pictures of the real warmongers, our own home-grown 'Serbs' in balaclavas. Interestingly the news excluded any shots of armed British soldiers.

In 1993 the nearest we get to investigative journalism is the boring details of royal sex lives. In such a context the IFM has an obligation to set the record straight. We must become ruthless opponents of censorship and tell the stories no-one else will dare print. We must expose the media as Whitehall lackeys and instil a new critical spirit into British politics, so that long after the journalists have stopped investigating, ordinary people do not stop asking questions and demanding the truth.

THE SELECTIVE SILENCE

Stuart Sharp looks at the war in what was Yugoslavia, and argues that the Serbs are not only victims of the civil war, but also victims of a media onslaught

A very bloody civil war is raging in the former Yugoslavia. Reporters from all over the world have descended onto this corner of the new Europe so that the full horror of the conflict can be relayed into our homes. Concepts such as 'rape camps' and 'ethnic cleansing' have been dreamt up by Western journalists to impress upon us the systematic and brutal nature of the violence.

Western sanctions have been imposed on Serbia, whose government is seen as the instigator of the civil war; it seems the Serbs will stop at nothing in their quest to build a Greater Serbia.

If we are to believe what we read in the newspapers, then the Serbian civilians living in Belgrade are surely the only people in Europe today who are unaware of what is being perpetrated in Bosnia; 'the tightly controlled media has ensured that news of the devastation of villages and mass killings of Bosnians does not filter through' (*Guardian,* 13 March).

In fact, censored reporting of this war is not confined to Belgrade TV. People in Britain are being systematically hoodwinked about the real nature of the war in the Balkans and only given half the story. The press and television alike prefer to scapegoat the Serbs in such a way as to justify Western interference.

Censorship and distortions in the media have helped to create a smoke-screen so that the true nature of the civil war is hidden behind confusing images of irrational ethnic hatreds. This approach was recently summed up by a piece in the *Daily Telegraph* by John Keegan. Keegan's key category to explain the conflict is that of 'primitivism'.

According to Keegan: 'That such primitivism has surfaced should not surprise us. Dark forces lurk behind the mask of even the most civilised societies, but the Balkans was a savage land until the last century.' (15 April)

Not one iota of evidence is summoned up to confirm his thesis that 'the Serbs are "primitive warriors"'. It is taken as read because, despite Keegan's tone of breathtaking discovery, this is precisely the same mantra repeated by every other journalist covering the war.

In fact, the Serbs are not 'primitives' and the war cannot be explained by the re-emergence of 'prehistoric tribalism'. Keegan's account is no more than a retreat into the supernatural and an unwitting admission that he has no analysis of the real forces driving the war forward.

Why are the newspapers so one-sided in their treatment of the war?

Once the Western media had accepted the basic framework of who was to blame for the conflict, the reporting was bound to be one-sided. It is not that British journalists are inherently anti-Serbian, but that their understanding is tempered by the general climate of conformity. With the collapse of any opposition parties and the decline of the left, many people, including journalists, have lost their political anchor.

The consensus on the Balkan war is enough to influence any journalist. From the Labour Party's John Smith to Margaret Thatcher, everyone is calling for stronger action against the Serbs. The only substantial difference between the Tory front-bench and its more belligerent critics, is one of tactics. John Major is worried that British troops will be exposed in a heightened conflict. But he shares his back-benchers' view that Western intervention is justified by Serb 'war-crimes'.

Is it any wonder that when journalists go to Bosnia, they have no difficulty finding victims of Serbian aggression but extreme difficulty in finding Serbian victims?

For example, it has been claimed that 'up to 20 000 women had been systematically raped' by Serbs (*Guardian,* 13 March), but despite the alleged scale of this operation, the much talked-about rape camps have yet to be found.

Borislav Herak was sentenced to death for rape and murder at a Muslim-led war crimes trial on 30 March, along with Sretko Damjanovic, another Serb soldier. Yet Damjanovic, backed up by a medical expert, claimed he had been tortured into making a confession. On the other hand, Herak seemed eager to incriminate himself without any prompting. The defence suggested Herak was mentally unbalanced. None of his alleged victims have been found, alive or dead (*Independent,* 31 March). But this has not deflected the general opinion that Serbs are operating a systematic policy of rape.

On 6 March the *Guardian* noted that 'the Serb population [of Bosnia] is now much lower than the 250,000 who lived here before last April'. So far there has been no attempt to explain why this should be. Yet on 5 March the same newspaper reported that 'a controversial plan to guarantee Muslim civilians safe passage from their besieged homes in Eastern Bosnia [would] aid "ethnic cleansing"'. In the case of the Serbs, refugee movements out of the war zones is inexplicable and hardly warrants a passing mention. In the case of Muslim refugee movements, it is automatically a Nazi-style plot, masterminded by the Serbian godfathers.

There are countless examples of reports which have either been suppressed or have received little coverage in the British media – such as the massacre of hundreds of Serbian civilians in Vukovar in November 1991, in Krajina in January 1993, and most recently around Srebrenica in Bosnia.

Margaret Thatcher was moved to call for the Muslims to be armed in order to combat such atrocities as the killing of at least 56 people on 13 April during a Serbian bombardment of the town. Tucked away in the middle of a report in the *Independent* on 2 April was the following: 'The Serbs have not had everything their way...about 1000 Serb civilians and 300 fighters have [reportedly] been killed in this area ... perhaps that figure is exaggerated, but General





PHOTOGRAPHS: MICHAEL KRAMER

Morillon of the UN believes that anger at such losses helps to explain the ferocity of the Serbian assault on Srebrenica.'

There is nothing particularly special about the Serbian people or their government, except that they make up one side in a civil war brought about by the weakness of the market system in Eastern Europe. The Serbs are simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. There was nothing inevitable about the war. It only turned into a bloodbath once the West began to intervene, by taking sides and consolidating the divisions. Now the conflict is being used by the United States, Germany, Britain and other Western governments to vie for power in the post-Cold War environment.

'Serb-bashing' has become part of a perverse game of diplomatic one-upmanship, in which Western powers can look tough and win political credibility at a time of world slump and general political uncertainty. This dangerous game has escalated the conflict in the former Yugoslavia by increasing tensions and raising the stakes (see 'The Truth about Yugoslavia' in *Irish Freedom* No20).

Censorship and selective reporting by Western journalists must be challenged. Otherwise, the real reasons for the war will become increasingly obscured and the bloody role of the West will be buried beneath a clamour for more intervention. Western politicians are already claiming moral superiority over the people of Eastern Europe and masking their responsibility for the descent into barbarism in that part of the world. The IFM is committed to exposing the tragic consequences of Western 'peacekeeping' wherever it rears its ugly head, and to opposing the censorship which allows it to go on unquestioned.

The true nature of the civil war is hidden behind confusing images of irrational ethnic hatreds

WAR DIARY

COMPILED BY AUSTIN CAMERON

JANUARY

■ **Thursday 14 January**
Belfast Brigade volunteers attack Andersonstown barracks, launching a *Mark 12* mortar from a pram: it punches a hole in the concrete floor of an observation tower, but only partially explodes

■ **Friday 15 January**
An IRA incendiary guts premises at Phillips's Garage in Adelaide St, Belfast. Hoax devices cause further disruption across the city
Joint army/RUC raids on a nationalist estate in Stewartstown, Co Tyrone leave three people needing hospital treatment

■ **Monday 18 January**
British soldiers escape injury when IRA volunteers lob a blast grenade at an armoured personnel carrier (APC) on Stewartstown Road, Belfast
Tyrone volunteers lob an impact grenade at an army foot patrol in Carrickmore high street. The grenade fails to explode but forces the patrol back to barracks
Tyrone volunteers blow the roof off a derelict house being used as a covert observation post by the army. Local people believe two soldiers to have been injured in the attack, in Drumcairn Forest, Stewartstown

■ **Wednesday 20 January**
A hospital porter and a security guard are severely injured when they intercept a Loyalist gang armed with hatchets and knives near the all-night canteen at Belfast's Royal Victoria Hospital
Clogher RUC barracks in Tyrone is seriously damaged by a 300lb *Barrack Buster* mortar, one of the latest additions to the IRA's armoury

■ **Saturday 23 January**
An IRA volunteer shoots dead an RUC member on patrol in the Diamond area of Derry
South Fermanagh Brigade volunteers fire over 200 rounds from a general purpose machine-gun at an army observation post at Clonatty Bridge near Newtonbutler

■ **Sunday 24 January** South Fermanagh volunteers fire 200 rounds of machine-gun fire at the British army checkpoint at Killyvilly near Roslea

■ **Thursday January 28**
A small Semtex bomb explodes in a litter bin outside Harrods store in London's Knightsbridge, causing considerable damage to the shop front
Catholic Martin McNamee, a 25-year old plumber, is killed by a UVF grenade tied to the door of a house on which he is working in Cookstown, Co Tyrone. The intended target of the attack and owner of the house had received several death threats from RUC members
A Loyalist gang is foiled in an attack on a taxi firm in Ardoyne Avenue, North Belfast, when a man slams the door on them. The gang then enters the burger bar next door and shoots the 19-year old man working behind the counter: he sustains gunshot wounds to his face and shoulder

■ **Saturday 30 January**
IRA incendiaries damage the Primark Store in Derry, while hoax alerts keep security forces busy around the city

FEBRUARY

■ **Monday 1 February** An IRA rocket fails to detonate when it hits an army APC on joint patrol on the Andersonstown Road in Belfast

■ **Tuesday 2 February**
Julie Statham (20), fiancee of Loyalist murder victim Diarmuid Shields who was killed a month earlier, commits suicide
Two SDLP members in Belfast escape injury when their houses are attacked by Loyalists with petrol bombs

■ **Wednesday 3 February**
28-year old nationalist Eugene Martin is shot dead by Loyalists in the shed at his home in Ballyronan, Co Derry. As in the case of Patrick and Diarmuid Shields, a legally-held weapon had been confiscated by the RUC prior to the attack
Belfast Brigade volunteers fire 15 rounds at an army/RUC foot patrol in Flax St, Ardoyne

■ **Thursday 4 February**
IRA volunteers in Belfast fire six rounds at a joint army/RUC checkpoint on the edge of the nationalist New Lodge
South Armagh volunteers launch a 200lb *Barrack Buster* mortar from the back of a tractor into Crossmaglen barracks. The explosion blows a large hole in the barracks' outer wall and injures a man working on the roof

■ **Monday 8 February**
A member of an army foot patrol is injured when an IRA volunteer fires at him from point blank range with a sawn-off shotgun in Belfast's Lower Falls area

■ **Tuesday 9 February**
British army Lance-Corporal Michael Joseph Beswick is killed by an IRA anti-personnel mine as his foot patrol moves down Cathedral Road in Armagh City. Running to take cover behind nearby brick pillars, other patrol members are caught by two more mines, causing injury to five others, four seriously

■ **Wednesday 10 February**
A small IRA bomb explodes in the doorway of a house in Cadogan Place in London's Knightsbridge
Belfast IRA volunteers lob an impact grenade at a joint army/RUC mobile patrol at the Glen Road/ Shaw Road junction, injuring a British soldier

■ **Thursday 11 February**
A UVF gang kills Catholic Thomas Molloy (32), firing several shots through the living room window of his home near Argory, North Armagh

■ **Friday 12 February**
A Loyalist gang bursts into a house on Springfield Road, South Belfast and fires several shots at a 45-year old Catholic man in a bedroom: he suffers wounds to his legs and hands

■ **Saturday 13 February**
A Catholic taxi driver foils a murder bid when his passenger produces a handgun near the Loyalist Village area in Belfast. The driver wrestles the gun from his attacker and runs back to his depot near the nationalist Markets area
IRA volunteers fire several shots at a well known UFF gang leader in a 100-yard chase in South Belfast. The IRA identify him as being responsible for at least 20 murders, and as the rifleman in the attack on the Ormeau Road bookies last year. This is the latest of several attempts to kill this man

■ **Monday 15 February**
The IRA's Belfast Brigade shoot dead RIR Lance-Corporal Mervyn Johnston (38) outside his home on the Highfield Estate, West Belfast

■ **Wednesday 17 February**
In the second attempt on his life in just over two years, nationalist Jimmy Rice is shot several times by a UVF assassin on Boucher Crescent, South Belfast

■ **Sunday 21 February** An RIR soldier is shot in the head and body at the Drury Lane Bar in Belfast, where he works as a doorman. He and another man had assaulted an IRA volunteer who fired at them
A UDA gunman fires at the Falls taxi rank on Castle Street, Belfast, injuring 3 drivers

■ **Monday 22 February**
Two RUC members are injured by an IRA anti-personnel mine inside Derry's RUC installation on Bishop Street

■ **Wednesday 24 February**
An RUC member dies from injuries sustained from a bomb placed under his car by IRA volunteers near Moy, Co Tyrone

■ **Thursday 25 February** RUC member Jonathan Reid (30) is shot dead by an IRA sniper while on patrol near Crossmaglen, South Armagh

■ **Friday 26 February** Three IRA bombs explode at a gas and petrol storage facility at Warrington, England, causing massive damage. A policeman is shot during the operation

■ **Saturday 27 February** An IRA bomb explodes outside a foodstore in Camden High Street, London. The IRA say that despite a 40 minute warning, the police failed to clear the area, resulting in 18 people being injured

IRA volunteers fire 20 rounds at a joint army/RUC checkpoint at York Street, near the New Lodge area in Belfast

■ **Sunday 28 February** Another army/RUC checkpoint sustains gunfire from IRA volunteers in Belfast city centre

MARCH

■ **Monday March 1** Two *Barrack Buster* mortars devastate the RUC barracks in Bessbrook, South Armagh – the most heavily patrolled village in the Six Counties. Four people working in the barracks are injured

■ **Thursday 4 March** An IRA volunteer fires 10 rounds at a civilian worker as he makes his way to work at Woodburn RUC/army barracks in East Belfast

■ **Friday 5 March** Two leading UDA members escape with their lives when fired on by IRA volunteers on the Shankill Road, Belfast. One of the pair is injured

■ **Saturday 6 March** IRA volunteers in Tyrone shoot a former UDR member, now operating with a UVF death squad, outside his home between Pomeroy and Donaghmore. The volunteers halt the action when the injured man approaches his young son

■ **Sunday 7 March** Four RUC reservists are seriously injured by a 500lb IRA bomb in Bangor, Co Down, detonated at 2.45am

■ **Monday 8 March** The RUC/army base at Keady in South Armagh is badly damaged by 3 *Barrack Buster* mortars. A crane driver, Nigel McCollum (25) is killed and 5 others, also working on the barracks, are injured

■ **Tuesday 9 March** An RIR member is shot and wounded by IRA volunteers as he leaves a bus depot by the Short Strand in East Belfast

■ **Wednesday 10 March** The IRA's Belfast Brigade shoots dead Norman Truesdale (37) in his shop on Oldpark Road, North Belfast. He had been involved with UDA death squads since the mid-70s

■ **Thursday 11 March** Forty rounds fired from assault rifles at RUC barracks in Belfast

Ten rounds fired at a RIR road block in Oxford Street, Belfast

■ **Friday 12 March** Members of an army foot patrol in Tyrone escape injury when an impact grenade lobbed among them fails to detonate

■ **Saturday 13 March** Two soldiers are injured, one very seriously, by an IRA anti-personnel mine in the New Barnsley area of West Belfast

An IRA mortar damages the British army observation tower at Glassdrummond outside Crossmaglen, South Armagh

■ **Sunday 14 March** A 10lb bomb explodes in Gloucester Street, Belfast city centre, at 11pm. A second device is defused in Adelaide Street

■ **Monday 15 March** Catholic Robert Shaw (56) is shot dead by the UDA while sitting in his van by Belfast Lough on the outskirts of North Belfast

■ **Wednesday 17 March** Lance-Corporal Lawrence Dickson (26) is shot dead by an IRA sniper while on foot patrol in Forkhill, South Armagh

Two construction workers employed on contracts for the army escape injury when they leave their van shortly before an IRA bomb destroys it in Aghadowey, Co Derry

■ **Saturday 20 March** IRA volunteers in Derry detonate an anti-personnel mine causing injury to members of a passing army foot patrol

Two IRA bombs explode in litter bins in Warrington town centre, killing Johnathan Ball (3), injuring Tim Parry (12) who later died, and causing several other injuries. The IRA say that police again failed to act on precise and adequate warnings

■ **Tuesday 23March** In Belfast's New Lodge Road area, 24-year old nationalist Henry Davies is seriously injured when a box which he picks up outside his employer's home explodes

■ **Wednesday 24 March** Sinn Fein member Peter Gallagher (43) is shot dead by the UDA as he arrives at work at Grosvenor Road in Belfast

In another UDA attack, this time in Ardoyne, a bomb smashes through a bedroom window and explodes, injuring Rosemary McGuigan, wife of Sinn Fein councillor Gerard McGuigan

■ **Thursday 25 March** A shrapnel grenade explodes after smashing through the bedroom window of Sinn Fein councillor Joe Austin: he escapes injury

Shortly before 9am, a UDA hit squad pours gunfire into a parked van in Castlerock, Co Derry, killing 2 nationalist men outright and injuring 3 others who die later. One of the men, James Kelly (25), is later claimed by the IRA as a volunteer

■ **Friday 26 March** Nationalist Damien Walsh (19) is shot dead and another man injured by the UDA while working at a coal yard in Poleglass, West Belfast. The gang fires at nearby shoppers before making off

■ **Tuesday 30 March** Near Loughmacrory, Co Tyrone, IRA volunteers blow up the spot chosen as a hide by an undercover army observation unit

A Catholic man escapes death when his neighbour spots a UVF bomb attached under his car in Dorset Square, Antrim town

■ **Wednesday 31 March** A 500lb car bomb behind Belfast City Hall fails to detonate, and is blown up by army technical officers

APRIL

■ **Thursday 1 April** Hoax alerts across Belfast keep crown forces busy, while one foot patrol comes under IRA sniper fire

■ **Friday 2 April** Volunteers of South Fermanagh Brigade fire over 100 rounds from automatic weapons at army engineers working on a permanent checkpoint at Kilkurk near the border

■ **Saturday 3 April** A British soldier is shot and wounded by an IRA sniper near Crossmaglen, South Armagh

■ **Sunday 4 April** A British solder escapes with minor injuries when only the Semtex charge of an improvised petrol flame-thrower explodes as his joint army/RUC patrol moves down Rockstown Road, Carrickmore in Co Tyrone

■ **Monday 5 April** A 10lb anti-personnel mine at Belfast Central Station explodes as army technicians move in to defuse it. No casualties are reported

■ **Wednesday 7 April** A small IRA bomb explodes outside the Conservative Club in Argyle Square, London, disrupting several tube lines and stations



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