

THE DOWNING STREET DECLARATION



**'New Unionism'
and the
'Communities of Resistance'**

A Republican Worker Tendency pamphlet

£1.00

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Introduction

To many the Downing Street Declaration is seen primarily as a challenge to the Republican Movement in Ireland. In this view it is an attempt to split the political wing, Sinn Fein, from the military wing, the I.R.A.. In our analysis we dig deeper, and argue that the ultimate target of this latest British government move are the 'communities of resistance' in the 'Six Counties'. Some of these are household names - the Falls and the Bogside for instance. We start from the recognition of the need to express solidarity with these 'communities of resistance'. They have a revolutionary potential, which not only threatens the 'Six Counties' statelet, but the United Kingdom itself. Indeed the very notions of 'Britishness' and the schizophrenic 'Ulster' identity, both products of an imperial history, are also under threat.

We argue that the U.K. state is under considerable strain and that the ruling class has come to recognise this. It is mounting a 'New Unionist' offensive. This has repercussions beyond Ireland and this pamphlet illustrates this with developments in both Scotland and Wales. Major has ensured Scottish Tories are well placed in the Northern Ireland Office to steer the Downing Street Declaration through the difficult waters ahead. The Tories' increased resort to rule through 'quangoes' in Labour-run Scotland and Wales, is designed to centralise power at Westminster. This strategy was first pioneered in the 'Six Counties'. The consequent political tussle between Tory and Labour, over whether the unity of the U.K. is best served by 'Select Committees all-round' or 'Devolution all-round' is also shown.

We seek to identify and analyse the various forces operating in the war against Irish self determination. These include the various military forces - the 19,500 British troops, the Royal Irish Regiment and the paramilitary Royal Ulster Constabulary. However, the state also relies on covert forces and the loyalist murder squads. If seats at the imperialist bargaining table are the carrot to attract the Republican Movement then the death squads are the stick, as their greatly increased activity shows. This role of serving British and Ulster Unionist interests creates tensions in the loyalist ranks. They have their own political agenda. Some are even ready to contemplate 'going it alone', with a bit of 'ethnic cleansing', or "nullification", to give their Protestant 'Ulster' more viability!

This pamphlet highlights the dilemma faced by the Republican Movement. The Downing Street Declaration, following on the Hume-Adams Talks, threatens to pull them more and more in to the camp of the constitutional nationalists. These middle class nationalists want a seat at the table where paper resolutions are endlessly discussed. At this table Sinn Fein would sit alongside representatives

from the Irish government and the Social Democratic and Labour Party. Dublin and the S.D.L.P. are not part of the opposition to British imperialism but an essential component if the 'New Unionist' gambit is to pay off. In the meantime many in the largely working class 'communities of resistance' still face daily repression and are denied access to employment or decent housing, due to sectarianism.

Certain members of the ruling class hope that the Republican Movement can be split to such an extent, that they do the policing - putting down the opposition within Republican ranks and controlling the anger in the 'communities of resistance'. They look not only to the precedents of the Irish Civil War between 1922-4, but to the Israeli plans to use the P.L.O. in such a role in Palestine, and to the A.N.C. leadership's support for a 'State of Emergency', implemented by the South African Defence Force, backed by the A.N.C.'s military wing.

Then we focus on 'her majesty's loyal opposition' but particularly the British Labour Party. Although it still pays occasional lip-service to the Irish right of self determination, it too is moving towards a copper-fastening of the Union, beyond even Thatcher's dreams. There is now increasing talk at the highest level of the Labour Party of introducing a 75% requirement in any 'Northern Ireland' referendum before Irish unity is allowed! This is of course the party that introduced the notorious '40% of the whole electorate' rule in the Scottish referendum of 1979. And back in Scotland again, the 'North British' branch of the Labour Party has now called itself the 'Scottish' Labour Party, both to dish the Scottish National Party and to misdirect any surge in support for Scottish self determination in working class ranks.

We examine the position of the 'revolutionary Brit Left', which claims to offer an alternative. We demonstrate how their failure to break away from the notion of 'Britishness' has left them woefully unprepared to challenge 'New Unionism'. Indeed they do not even recognise it. One immediate consequence of this is their inability to challenge the far Right. The 'Brit Left' mostly concentrate on the 'foreign' nature of fascism, highlighting the B.N.P.'s German Nazi roots or figures like Le Pen, the leader of the French National Front. Fascism in the U.K. marches under a Union Jack - the 'butchers' apron'. The largest fascist organisations in the U.K. today are to be found amongst the Ulster loyalists, responsible for the death of hundreds of Catholics and nationalists. Their lambeg drums are heard on 'both sides of the water' and they have increasing links with the **British** National Party.

Our pamphlet concludes with an appeal to establish a 'new republicanism'. This can not be confined to Ireland alone, but must be part of a wider political strategy for Scotland, Wales and England too. There is no 'British road to socialism' but there can be a 'republican road to communism'.

26.4.94

1. Trying to prevent the break-up of the United Kingdom

From the Anglo-Irish Agreement to the Downing Street Declaration

Major's Downing Street Declaration forms part of the ruling class's 'New Unionist' offensive for the whole of the United Kingdom. Central to its strategy is this latest attempt to break the continued nationalist resistance in the 'Six Counties'. However, there is a major difference between this and earlier political initiatives, such as the Sunningdale and Hillsborough Talks. Those attempted to marginalise the whole Republican Movement, in order to crush it militarily, and leave its mainly working class and small farmer supporters demoralised and forgotten.

However, since the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement, the I.R.A. has shown a continued ability to undertake military action. It has struck at the heart of the City; and along the Border it has confined British troops to heavily fortified bases, supplied by helicopter. Sinn Fein too has rallied, after an initial drop in electoral support following the Agreement. Last year Sinn Fein received more votes than any other party in Belfast in the local elections. This was a major psychological shock in the unionist heartland. It is this resilience of the Republican Movement which has led to a new British unionist response.

The Downing Street Declaration - aimed at the republican 'communities of resistance'

What is new about the latest initiative is the British government's attempt to split the Republican Movement, by wooing its leadership into the camp of constitutional nationalism. The Republican Movement is rooted in real 'communities of resistance' - largely working class in Belfast, Derry and several towns west of the Bann; mixed working class, small farmer and trader along the Border. These communities, particularly in West Belfast and Derry, have a wider tradition of resistance that stretches back to the early Civil Rights Movement. The Falls and the Bogside are amongst the best known community names in the U.K., even if there is widespread ignorance as to the real conditions of life there.

These 'communities of resistance' are republican, not because of some romantic attachment to militant Irish nationalism. They are republican because they daily face the full powers of the Crown - **her majesty's** 'mainland' regiments, the **Royal** Irish Regiment, the **Royal** Ulster Constabulary; the **loyalist** death squads and detention in **her majesty's** prisons!

From civil disobedience to armed resistance

Although armed self-defence has a long history, going back to the eighteenth century Defenders, it is not a path quickly adopted by successive generations. Mass civil disobedience was the original method chosen to confront the deeply sectarian Orange state in 'Northern Ireland' in 1968. When the 'Six Counties' state proved not only irreformable, but to have the full military backing of the British state on Bloody Sunday, in Derry in January 1972, the campaign for civil rights gave way decisively to the campaign for national liberation. In the face of armed repression, the newly founded Provisional I.R.A. emphasised the need for armed resistance. The 'communities of resistance' turned from militant reform to revolutionary nationalism.

There is no other part of the United Kingdom that has such a depth of political experience as these 'communities of resistance'. This experience includes political organisation, mass and armed resistance, prisoner support, community organisation and social provision, cultural resistance, independent publishing and where the opportunity arises, wholehearted participation in strike action alongside non-nationalist workers over economic demands.

What exactly, in immediate terms, does the Downing Street Agreement offer these communities? What kind of peace is it that leaves the British Army, the Royal Irish Regiment (the cosmetic name change given to the U.D.R.) and the R.U.C. still in place? What kind of deal is it that allows the possibility of the reconstruction of a discredited 'Northern Ireland' state with a new 'Stormont'? What chance is there that the Ulster Unionists will change their spots and offer "justice, equality, respect or democracy"?... "Unionists in Northern Ireland, given the opportunity would not give the Nationalists daylight"! (Bernadette McAliskey, 'The Guardian', 31.12.93) Although the Republican Movement is the immediate target for the Downing Street Declaration, by cooption if possible, by force if necessary, it is impossible to coopt whole 'communities of resistance'. They have to be broken - that is the real aim of the Downing Street Declaration.

Constitutional nationalism is no real threat to the U.K. state

The fact that the United Kingdom is a unionist state, not a unitary state, means that nationalism is endemic. Unionism has recognised the existence of England, Ireland (now 'Northern Ireland'), Scotland and Wales, but it has never conceded the right of self determination. This helps to create plenty of national grievances, which form the substance of nationalist politics, whether it be the Social Democratic and Labour Party, Scottish National Party or Plaid Cymru. Indeed, the overtly unionist parties - Labour, Liberal and sometimes Tory - are not averse to resorting to the small coin of such nationalism at times. The essence of

constitutional nationalist politics consists of making greater national claims when dividing the unionist state spoils, not a revolutionary break-up of the U.K. state.

The U.K. state has long experience of dealing with constitutional nationalism - in Ireland, Scotland and Wales. It has always been able to gain the upper hand in such dealings. Indeed unionism's greatest 'success' was enforcing the cowed acquiescence of the Irish nationalist politicians in the 'Six Counties' between 1922 and 1968. Whilst Major knows the clock can not be turned back to pre-1968, he would dearly like the British media to give 'the province' the same scant attention it did, in those halcyon days of British and Ulster Unionism. Constitutional nationalism greatly helped to achieve that long silence!

Constitutional nationalists are easily impressed by smooth talk. This is a middle class political trait. Therefore constitutional nationalists have focussed on empty phrases in the Declaration such as, "It is for the people of Ireland alone to exercise their right to self determination", or "the British government has no selfish strategic or economic interest in Northern Ireland". The first is negated by the acceptance of the militarily imposed partition, with a boundary artificially drawn to secure the desired result - maintenance of the Union. The second is a cynically chosen form of words meaning the Tories claim their interests in the 'Six Counties' to be altruistic not selfish. They also claim that there are no selfish reasons behind their closures of mines, hospitals and schools over here!

The Downing Street Declaration is part of a wider all-U.K. 'New Unionism' - the Scottish connection

There is a noticeable word missing in the much heralded, but empty statement - "no selfish strategic or economic interests". That word is 'political'. The Tories have a vital political interest in keeping the 'Six Counties' in the U.K.. They fear the knock-on effect for the rest of the U.K., particularly for Scotland, should the 'Six Counties' leave. Thatcher, Lamont and the Tory Right have been quick to highlight this, and will make much trouble for Major, just as they have over Maastricht, if he appears to be going 'soft' on the nationalists. In particular they fear the impact of a power-sharing legislative assembly on 'mainland' politics. Thatcher depended on 'majority rule', even when in electoral terms this was 'minority rule'! In their magazine, 'Forward', the Tory Right point out, "The danger of devolution that Mr. Major has spelt out many times to the Scots applies equally to the province." Although Thatcher probably still enjoys the support of some senior officers in the armed forces' clandestine operations and in the intelligence services, the majority of the ruling class now prefers Major's 'New Unionist' strategy. This is due to the failures of Thatcher's gung-ho Unionism. Her approach to defence of the Union had opened up the spectre to the ruling

class of their state becoming the dis-United Kingdom. In the aftermath of the Hunger Strike there was a major political breakthrough for Sinn Fein, both at local level and at Westminster elections. When Scotland was given 'Devolution - Tory style', with a trial run for the poll tax, this brought two very uncomfortable years for the state, with mass defiance of the law and the 'opposition' leaders too. This culminated in the Trafalgar Square Riots, reminiscent of the early Civil Rights marches in the 'Six Counties'. After Thatcher's demise Major was called in to paper over the cracks.

The strategy behind the Downing Street Declaration has the advantage that it is also backed by majority of Tories, the parliamentary 'opposition', the S.D.L.P., Dublin and for the first time since Sunningdale, an Ulster Unionist leader! It also fits in with the 'New Unionism' which Major has been trying to piece together for the whole of the United Kingdom, since the failure of Thatcher's gung-ho Unionism. It was his decision to put defence of the Union to the forefront of his 1992 Election Campaign, in his Wembley Speech of April 5th.. Confronting constitutional nationalism in Scotland, he resorted to soothing talk of a 'Stock Taking' Exercise. This was later supplemented by the 'bribe' of a Scottish Select Committee for Donald Dewar, the then Scottish Labour leader; and later a position for an S.N.P. appointee on the E.C.'s Committee of Regions to woo their parliamentary leadership. Constitutional nationalists can be bought pretty cheaply!

Hence Major's strategy in Ireland is to reinforce constitutional nationalism at the expense of revolutionary nationalism, the better to pave the way for his 'New Unionism' in the whole of the United Kingdom. He has ensured that Scottish Unionists, with a record of committed defence of the Union, are central to his strategy in the 'Six Counties' - Michael Ancram, Minister of State in the Northern Ireland Office and Malcolm Rifkind, Defence Secretary. To further emphasise the Scotland/'Northern Ireland' Unionist link, Raymond Robertson, Tory M.P. for Aberdeen South has been made parliamentary private secretary to Ancram. As he stated, "The constitution has always been a particular interest of mine and defending the Union comes naturally." ('The Scotsman' 27.1.94) Trying to win Dublin's acquiescence is the job of Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd. Although he is from England, he was co-author of the '70s potboiler, 'Scotch on the Rocks', which deals with a threatened Scottish nationalist takeover. It is the defence of the whole Union which is at stake not just hanging on to 'Northern Ireland'.

Bolstering 'Britishness' to maintain the Union

Central to the 'New Unionist' strategy is the defence of 'Britishness'. With the long term decline of the British Empire and the U.K.'s worsening economic position, the notion of 'Britishness' has weakened, particularly in Scotland, but also in Wales. Thatcher's frequent bouts of English chauvinism have also undermined 'Britishness'

and were a contributory factor in the eventual loss ruling class confidence in her rule. The United Kingdom would be very much harder to defend without the ideological cement 'Britishness' provides.

It is only the unionists of 'Northern Ireland' who have registered any increase in identification with 'Britishness'. Yet neither Ireland in the past, nor 'Northern Ireland' today, has ever been constitutionally part of 'Britain'. This is highlighted by the official name of the state - the 'United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland'. The reason for unionists in 'Northern Ireland' becoming more 'British' is easy to understand. An Irish identification many were prepared to accept in the past no longer guarantees them a politically and economically privileged position. Furthermore the massive British state subvention of £3.66 billion to 'Northern Ireland' is a considerable material inducement for them to become more 'British'. This is particularly the case amongst the more economically influential upper and middle class unionists. They have even produced a small integrationist wing, which advocates the ending of a separate 'Ulster' identity altogether, in favour of a complete 'British' identification. This view also has supporters in both British Conservative and Labour camps.

Unionists throughout the U.K. realise that popular identification with 'Britain' has been a vital prop to maintain ruling class control. Not only is support for 'British' nationality central to the Tories, but to the Liberals and Labour too. The weakening of 'British' nationality not only threatens the traditional unionist parties but also the United Kingdom.

Defending 'Britain' aids the authoritarian state and the far Right

The ruling class has seen the dangers ahead. Hence 'New Unionism's attempt to widen the geographical basis of 'Britishness', to compensate for the 'thinning out' of support in the rest of the U.K.. The continued decline of the United Kingdom is probably irreversible. Therefore, there is likely to be a continuing decline in the notion of 'Britishness', particularly in Scotland and Wales. 'Britishness' has never taken real root amongst the nationalist population of the 'Six Counties'. The U.K. is now economically too weak to be able offer the peoples of its constituent nations the prospects of the increased living standards that were possible when the British Empire was a world force. The only thing that can substitute for the prospect of 'Britain, great again', is an increasing resort to the worst chauvinism, racism and more anti-democratic and brutal methods of centralised control.

This reinforcement of 'Britishness' gives succour to even more reactionary forces. The name of the fascist **British** National Party makes it quite clear what it is defending. The wider appeal of the B.N.P. has little to do with swastikas,

'seig heils', or straight arm salutes. Millwall, where they have gained their first councillor, was heavily bombed by the Luftwaffe during the Second World War. The B.N.P. are not trying to recreate the Third Reich but advocate a white 'British' nation. They seek alliances with **loyalists** in 'Northern Ireland' and Scotland. It should be stating the obvious that the B.N.P. is a thoroughly **British** organisation. The blindness of many to this reality stems from their desire also to be defenders of a 'British' nation, only one they hope will be progressive instead of reactionary. This is dangerous nonsense. There is no 'British' nation but there is a British ruling class. This class is quite prepared to resort to fascist thugs if it is necessary to maintain their rule. In 'Northern Ireland' the British state has already resorted to the clandestine use of loyalist (i.e. British fascist) death squads (the Ulster Freedom Fighters and Ulster Volunteer Force) to kill nationalists. In both France and Italy the parliamentary Right has been openly prepared to make deals with fascists. British constitutional parties are every bit as capable of making such deals, if they feel it necessary.

Nor can a line be drawn between the conservative or reactionary Right and the liberal or social democratic Left when it comes to appeasing fascists. Loyalist death squad activity took place in the 'Six Counties' under Labour as well as Tory governments. Both the Liberal and Labour Party promoted the racism in Millwall which mightily helped the B.N.P. to get a foothold. In Lothian it was a Labour council that gave the go ahead for marches in June 1992 and 1993 by the Independent Orange Order which supports the U.D.A./U.F.F. loyalist death squads, whilst banning republican marches.

Whilst 'New Unionism' is forced by the present strength of opposition, particularly in the 'communities of resistance' to talk liberal, this is merely rhetoric to cover the coercive measures that will be required to bolster the 'Britishness' and the United Kingdom.

2. Rebuilding the Unionist state in the 'Six Counties'

Reforming Stormont

Bernadette McAliskey, chair of the Independent Socialist Party, has got to the heart of the Downing Street Agreement. In an article for 'The Guardian' (31.12.93) she states what the governments of the United Kingdom and Ireland have agreed:-

1. Both governments accept the reality of partition in Ireland...
2. Both governments will work together to reconstruct the state of Northern Ireland...

The centrepiece of the Major/Molyneux deal is this "reconstruction of the state of Northern Ireland, which has been in suspended animation since the abolition of the Northern Ireland Stormont Parliament in 1972". This obviously remains a highly contentious area for nationalists, including many S.D.L.P. supporters. They remember only too well the last Stormont - "a Protestant Parliament for a Protestant people". The re-establishment of Stormont still remains the aim of Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party.

For Molyneux the reconstruction of the 'Northern Ireland' state is inseparable from the strengthening of his Ulster Unionist Party. However he knows that the best chance of success for this, is for the glare of unwanted 'mainland' publicity to be removed. Therefore he is suggesting something less provocative than the old Stormont to put in its place. "His plan is for a non-legislative 85 member Assembly, a sort of glorified local government. It would be more like Strathclyde Regional Council..." ('The Scotsman' 31.1.94) This will also have the advantage of leaving fewer local government powers in the hands of nationalist dominated councils west of the Bann, or even possibly Belfast in the future!

Whilst the Tories at present want to woo the S.D.L.P. with the prospect of a power-sharing legislative Assembly in 'Northern Ireland', they are quite capable of downgrading this, arriving closer to Molyneux's position. To achieve this they need to neutralise Sinn Fein as an independent political force, and remove the political pressure for greater change. If nationalist opposition was still able to create a stalemate, preventing the implementation of either political option, then the 'quango' rule brought about by direct rule would continue. The word 'quango' means quasi-autonomous government organisation. However, with government patronage they have virtually no autonomy from the state, but are autonomous of any democratic accountability. Many services still run by local authorities 'on

the mainland' are run by 'quangoes' such as the Northern Ireland Housing Executive in the 'Six Counties'. The Tories could bring in selected Ulster Unionists and career hungry S.D.L.P. members to supplement their other appointees. 'Quango' rule is now increasingly the favoured option for running nations like Scotland and Wales, which do not provide enough locally elected Tories! This growth of 'quango' power has the advantage for the Tories of narrowing the difference between their proposals for 'Northern Ireland' and Scotland, already a cause of some embarrassment to the government.

A new Conservative and Unionist alliance

Molyneux and his party form the central axis of Major's 'New Unionist' strategy in the 'Six Counties'. The current parliamentary arrangement the Tories have with the Ulster Unionists is but a possible first step to the rebuilding of an old alliance. Hence John Major's resurrection in Blackpool on 8th. October 1993 of his party's full title, "This will remain the Conservative and Unionist Party".

This has meant ditching another alternative - going for the full integrationist option. Robert McCartney and a small minority of Ulster Unionists supported this, but they have been marginalised inside the party. Such an option would have led to the slow dismantling of all the apparatus of Ulster Unionist Party control, leading to both increased 'mainland' and middle class Catholic appointments to top jobs in 'Northern Ireland'. The poor performance of the Northern Ireland Conservatives in an earlier parliamentary by-election, where they polled fewer votes than Sinn Fein, has also undermined this political option for the Tory party.

The other option of unquestioning backing for the Ulster Unionists was finally abandoned when Thatcher signed the Anglo-Irish Agreement. The closure of much of the shipbuilding, engineering and textile industry, which provided the traditional economic strength behind the Ulster Unionists, has weakened their political position. Successive British governments have instead tried to persuade Ulster Unionist leaders to trim their political aspirations in line with their reduced economic strength. Molyneux, who represents this more 'moderate' upper and middle class approach, is prepared to give 'New Unionism' a try. He patiently points out to doubtful Ulster Unionists that this is the only way to save their longer term interests whilst maintaining the backing of 'Britain'.

The Rightist threat to the 'New Unionism' - the populists of the D.U.P. and the fascists of the Combined Loyalist Military Command

The problem for 'moderate' Ulster Unionism has always been defections, which have commanded widespread support amongst the unionist rank-and-file, brought

up on "No Surrender!", "This We Will Maintain" and "Not an Inch!" The spectre of Ian Paisley's D.U.P. looms large over all these attempts to build a more acquiescent Ulster Unionism. For many working class and some middle class unionists are indeed going to have to pay some price for continued British backing for the Union. The last time the unionists in Ireland were forced to make concessions was in 1922, after the major Republican offensive in the War of Independence. As a result the Irish Unionists became the trimmed down 'Ulster' Unionists (they abandoned three Ulster counties as well!) Many of Paisley's supporters no doubt feel they are going to be similarly sacrificed today by the 'fur coat brigade'. If room is to be made, with more government jobs for Catholics, and there is to be stricter enforcement of anti-discrimination laws in private firms, then many loyalists feel it will be at their expense. And for those who have not got a job, there are fears that their compensatory annual rituals of Protestant supremacy, the Orange marches, may be officially curtailed. Some traditional march routes have already been altered, to the outrage of many loyalists. They have also witnessed the first nationalist rally in the centre of Belfast last year, whilst it is the loyalists who now look in, from the outside of Derry's walls!

The Combined Loyalist Military Command groups together the fascist wing of unionism, united in their opposition to Catholics and nationalists, but divided on the political way out of their present situation. Increasingly it seems that the only alternative road for Ulster loyalism, is to go along the road of 'Ulster independence'. This would mean giving up on both loyalism and unionism to defend a "Protestant way of life", since there would be no-one to be loyal to or to unite with! (Although there are some 'Ulster' and Scottish loyalists who support the recreation of the mythical united kingdom of the Cruithin or Picts in Ulster and Scotland!) The U.D.A. has produced a plan for a Doomsday situation. This plan resembles that of the extreme Right Afrikaner nationalists, who wanted to set up a state for whites only in the Veldt. The U.D.A. report also talks of "nullification", the loyalists' grim new addition to the fascist vocabulary of 'ethnic cleansing'. Despite the cold horror of this, their published map still abandons much of three counties to the nationalists. So, whilst Sammy Wilson, the press officer for the D.U.P. has welcomed these plans as a "very valuable return to reality"(!), such 'sacrifices' are likely to be more unpalatable to the majority of unionists than Molyneux's. Although the D.U.P. openly courts fascist loyalism, particularly through the breakaway Independent Orange Order, it is unlikely in the present circumstances to adopt the U.D.A.'s 'final solution'. Instead Paisley hopes to put pressure on the Ulster Unionists to make only the most minimal concessions to nationalism and the 'traitorous' Major. In the run-up to the European elections Molyneux has had to distance himself from the Downing Street Declaration, for fear of pressure from Paisley. However, he is still being careful not to attack Major, who still offers mainstream Ulster Unionism its best survival option.

Ulster and British Unionism - using loyalist fascism for their own ends

Yet the fascist paramilitaries of the U.D.A./U.F.F. and U.V.F still have a role in Ulster Unionists' schemes. Their state was founded by the gerrymandered 'ballot and the bullet'. To supplement the repression undertaken by official regular and reserve forces, pogroms and murders were directed against Catholics, dissident Protestants and socialists by irregular forces as well. The readiness to utilise extra-parliamentary and irregular armed forces is one hallmark of fascism. Another is the persecution of minority 'scapegoats'. The old Ulster Unionist ruling class was prepared to resort to such fascism to maintain its power. However, an established ruling class rarely likes to have to depend on such methods for long. Hence, once their original purpose had served ruling class ends, the irregular forces were demobilised. The Ulster Unionists, however, made sure that, as well as the regular armed forces, they could call upon these fascists too when necessary. They kept special reserve forces, with guns at the ready, whose membership overlapped with extreme loyalism. The Orange Order also helped maintain contact with these irregular 'reserves'. Molyneux would dearly like the regular armed forces to eliminate the republican threat, so that Ulster Unionism did not have to turn to the loyalist paramilitaries. Fascism is distasteful to 'respectable' unionism. However, he knows that mainstream unionism may still have to call on these fascists should things get worse for them. Therefore he can not break all his links.

The British state would like not to have to depend too much on the loyalist paramilitaries either. However, they perform a useful clandestine role, when official Crown forces are politically constrained. Therefore connections, which would be politically embarrassing in public, are maintained through the intelligence services. A good recent example was the British intelligence arranged arms shipment from Poland to the loyalist paramilitaries. They were not delivered, but the threat had already served the purpose of frightening the Dublin government into closer acceptance of Major's 'New Unionism' and a sidelining of the Hume-Adams Talks, with their constitutional nationalist agenda. Furthermore, since the announcement of the Declaration, there has been a stepping up of loyalist death squad activity, designed to intimidate nationalists. There have also been firebomb attacks on Dublin and Dundalk. This is a repeat of a similar pattern in the past. Striking evidence pointed to British intelligence/loyalist collaboration in the Dublin bombings of 1972, when the aim was to scare the Irish government into fuller cooperation with the anti-Republican drive. In this it was successful, when the Dublin government passed the revised Offences Against the State Act.

Even Amnesty International, usually reticent when dealing with 'Northern Ireland', has stated in its latest report, that there is "mounting evidence of collusion between Government forces and groups like the Ulster Defence Association that oppose any change in Northern Ireland's status quo"... "The report spoke of the possible

concealment of unlawful killings by the army and the Royal Ulster Constabulary and allegations that the security services were one-sided in protecting the population from paramilitary violence and terror - exposing the Catholic minority to random attacks from Loyalist death squads even in areas ringed by security cordons." ('The Scotsman' 9.2.94)

The question is often asked - are the loyalist paramilitaries merely agents of the British state, or do they have independent political objectives? Yes, they do have their own objectives, reflecting the distinctive interests of a threatened traditional lower middle class and those loyalist workers desperately trying to hang on to their remaining privileges. However, it is their declining social weight which means they can only effectively operate as an agent for larger class interests. Their own declared aims are not supported by the U.K. state. The intelligence services only finds these fascists useful in as far as they help the wider Unionist agenda. After they have completed their allotted tasks, they can therefore be 'sacrificed' every now and again, when British rulers want to appear more even-handed. Hence the imprisonment of British secret service agent and U.D.A. officer, Brian Nelson, last year. No wonder there is so much feeling of 'betrayal' in loyalist ranks.

'Ulster' - a republican past, a fascist future?

The major political weakness in the 'Ulster' loyalist camp is largely a product of the shifting 'national' allegiances, which unionists have had to accommodate over the last century. Up until the Irish War of Independence, both unionists and nationalists thought of themselves as Irish. Now the concept of the Irish nation held by members of the Irish Ascendancy was no doubt rather restricted - first to themselves, then later to other Protestants, whilst Catholics were only allowed in, 'kicking and screaming', as second class 'citizens', or rather subjects. British army recruiting posters, right up to the First World War, used to appeal to Paddy, Jock and Taffy, to sign up. It was only when the Ascendancy began to lose control of most of Ireland, that an attempt was made to create a new 'Ulster' identity, separate from the Irish nation, with the formation of the Ulster Unionists. However, even this was not very successful, since Ulster Unionists in three counties had to be abandoned to the Free State, the better to preserve a unionist majority in the other six counties. Furthermore, those in charge of the new 'Ulster' state tried to push a 'British' nationality too, claiming their 'Ulster' to be a mere 'province', rather than a new 'nation'. This was to avoid any emphasis on their constitutionally recognised separateness from Britain. It comes as a shock to some 'Ulster' loyalists, visiting or settling 'on the mainland', that they are often considered Irish over here.

The distinguishing feature of Irish and Ulster Unionism has been its loyalty, not

to parliament, which it has regularly defied, but to the Crown, or rather its anti-democratic powers. It is the Crown which underwrites Protestant supremacy through the Protestant succession. It is the Crown which backs the continued armed force, needed to hold down the non-unionist population. However, the unionists' failure to build an 'Ulster' nation, encompassing all its residents, has been a constant source of weakness. For to build such a 'nation' would undermine the very purpose of Ulster Unionism, which is to cement the local ruling class's control through the granting of privilege to Protestants. Now that the British ruling class can clearly see that the only way to maintain 'Northern Ireland' is to involve middle class Catholics, with the support of Dublin, many loyalists are left floundering. Their only hope of preserving Protestant privilege lies in supporting 'mainland' British fascism, which does not have the power at present to protect them; or going it alone with a fascist, further slimmed down, 'ethnically' exclusive 'Ulster' for Protestants only.

With the British connection no longer guaranteeing much material protection, and loyalists split over where to go politically, the time has arrived for serious political and ideological struggle. After all Ulster Presbyterianism was a major contributor to the original republicanism of the United Irishmen. Farsighted republicans today, in the tradition of the United Irishmen, should begin to utilise this. This would certainly involve a long and hard political struggle but it could open up the prospect of working class unity in Ireland once more.

The Republican leadership's departure from original republican principles is highlighted by their demand that the British government joins the ranks of the 'persuaders'. This means that British Unionists should persuade Ulster Unionists to become Irish nationalists! This is a far cry from Wolfe Tone's republicanism, which was designed to unite 'Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter' against British Unionism. It isn't in the nature of British Unionism to slit its own throat. Nor is it in the nature of Ulster Unionism to be gently persuaded.

The 'neo-unionist' agenda - dissolving class and political difference into 'identity' difference

'Neo-unionism' is the name that has been given to attempts to put a liberal gloss on a new 'Northern Ireland' state. This political trend is perhaps best represented by the political magazine 'Fortnight'. Its strongest support comes from the growing Catholic and the small liberal Protestant middle class. 'Neo-unionism' involves the state erecting roadblocks on the road to national unity by recognising and institutionalising 'identity' - nationalist or unionist; Catholic or Protestant; Gaelic or English; 'native' or 'settler', Irish or 'British' - and all thoroughly 'European'. Cultural freedom is vitally important, but when the state reinforces separate identity, it does so for a purpose. It is to build up a new middle class

cultural 'police' for the political purpose of divide and rule. Their careers become bound up with defending these 'identities', by hiding class difference and heightening cultural difference. They would like to dissolve the reality of class and the political nature of the unionist/nationalist divide into a myriad multiple 'identities', which a new 'Northern Ireland' state should recognise. As an example some suggest the annual round of Orange marches is little more than a quaint folk custom akin to dancing round the maypole in England - part of the rich tapestry of northern life! By such false means the sectarian triumphalist nature of the Orange Order is conjured away.

'Neo-unionism' gives succour to 'New Unionism' by promoting a 'British' identity for Protestants. In the longer run this very much aids the British ruling class, who face a decline in 'Britishness' elsewhere within the U.K.. There has always been movement between 'identities' in Ireland, with 'natives' becoming English speakers or Protestant or unionist, whilst 'settlers' have become Gaelic speakers or Catholic or nationalist. There is even one Orange drum with a slogan in Gaelic, whilst the Apprentice Boys of Derry desperately try to hold on to the loyalist name for their city - 'Londonderry'! There are many families of mixed religion and those of none. The British imperial state has a long history of promoting cultural difference the better to divide and rule. In Ireland it gave official backing to the Roman Catholic Church, because it feared the non-sectarian alternative more. This tradition has been continued in 'Northern Ireland' to this day.

It will take further political challenge before 'New Unionism' fully takes on this 'neo-unionist' agenda. This type of politics is more associated with the Labour Party, so it may have to await a possible future Labour government. The Tories have traditionally been identified with Orangeism, particularly in Ireland and Scotland. This largely confines their divide-and-rule tactics to operating out of one camp. The Labour Party also has a long history of fostering difference. However it plays the divide-and-rule game from both camps. Thus the Labour Party could maintain links with the old unionist Northern Ireland Labour Party and Gerry Fitt's one-time Republican Labour Party. In Scotland it can attempt to appease loyalist support in Lothian by allowing an Independent Orange Order march, whilst banning a Republican James Connolly march. It can also try to 'buy' Catholic support in Coatbridge, by preferential location of council financed amenities!

With loyalist paramilitaries prepared to mount physical attacks on Gaelic Athletic Association sports grounds and threaten Irish folk festivals, which they see as the 'cultural wing of the I.R.A.' (!), any moves towards neo-unionism will be more difficult in 'Northern Ireland'. However, the first tentative moves have been made, with Belfast City Council allowing Conradh na Gaelige, the Gaelic League, to use the City Halls for its centenary celebrations. This is a former

bastion of hard-line Unionism. It is highly unlikely that Unionists will allow such developments without trying to mould its political direction.

Political marginalisation through cultural cooption - the Welsh connection

You have to go to Wales to clearly see this attempt at political direction through the use of state cultural cooption. The main political challenge in this case has been over language rights, led by Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg, the Welsh Language Society. The Tories have drawn Plaid Cymru into their 'quangoes', in their attempt to marginalise this radical challenge. Plaid's former Left leader, Dafydd Ellis Thomas, was once the mover of the writ for the by-election following Bobby Sands' death, when all British unionists - Tory, Labour and Liberal - united to try and prevent this happening. Now he is in the House of Lords, alongside Lord Fitt and heads up the Welsh Language Board, a Tory cultural 'quango'! However, this move "was merely testing the water for a more generalised Plaid policy of cuddling up to the Tories. Plaid's inability to break out of Y Fro Gymraeg (Welsh speaking Wales) means that it needs Tory patronage far more than the Tories need a Welsh lapdog" ('Y Faner Goch - Welsh Socialist', no. 55). In this manner Plaid Cymru has been reduced to a junior partner of the Tories. The Tories can use this to play off Welsh-speaking Wales against mainly Labour-voting English-speaking Wales.

One of the first fruits of this cooperation has been a Welsh Language Act, which has predictably divided the language movement on class lines. Lord Thomas has warmly welcomed this Act, since it guarantees well-paid jobs in the state's cultural apparatus both for himself and others. This attempt at cultural divide and rule, through the use of carefully chosen appointments to state 'quangoes', helps to build up a middle class with a stake in the status quo. In Wales they have already received a nickname - the 'Taiffia'! However, as its opponents quite rightly point out, the Welsh Language Act denies Welsh equal status with English, despite Welsh being the first language of many in Wales. Thus the majority of Welsh speakers, workers and farmers, are still left as second class 'subjects'!

Similarly, whatever the initial verbally declared intentions of the 'Northern Ireland' 'neo-unionists' you can be sure that they will be the first to accept far less, should their 'reformed' state offer them concessions in the cultural sphere. They are then likely to denounce those who push for full equality. If you want to find a 'Six Counties' example of state manipulated cultural activity you just need to look to the state channelling of funds to compliant, mainly S.D.L.P. or Catholic Church controlled community organisations in West Belfast.

3. The Response of the Republican Movement

The Republican Movement and the Downing Street Declaration - towards a new Treaty?

Given the political prospects offered by the Downing Street Declaration, how has the Republican leadership arrived at their present confused position? Now that the constitutional nationalist hopes encompassed in the Hume-Adams Talks have been successfully sidelined by Major, Reynolds and Clinton, (with the help of John Hume, leader of the S.D.L.P.) talk of a "peace process" has become entangled with the Downing Street Declaration, which is on 'New Unionist' terms. The Republican leadership's calls for "clarification" will do nothing to alter the real political nature of the Downing Street Agreement. In 1985 the Republican Movement needed no clarification about the nature of the earlier Anglo-Irish Agreement. "Our enemies have hatched a highly sophisticated counter-revolutionary plan" ('Republican News' 19.12.85) These words could equally apply to the 1993 Downing Street Declaration. The Declaration gives Irish nationalists nothing they have not already won in practice. Beyond this, all they are offered are empty phrases. It is the unionists who get the guarantees. Or as Molyneux puts it, "The final declaration is a 'muddled tortuous one' and while one didn't like the wording it didn't pose any threat to the Union." ('The Scotsman' 31.1.94) If the I.R.A. lay down their arms, the Downing Street Declaration will go the way of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. "At the time all kinds of reforms in the area of security were thought {by constitutional nationalists} to be about to flow from the accord, but did not. The U.D.R. was expected to be abolished, the police reformed, etcetera. The British quickly showed that having signed the agreement, they were not much interested in pursuing any of these measures." (Jack Holland, 'Irish Post' 25.12.93)

For many republicans today the historical spectre of the 1922 Treaty must be raising its head. The Republican negotiators of the day conceded partition. The British Prime Minister, Lloyd George, both threatened them with massive military force and beguiled them with the 'promise' of future success through the Boundary Commission. This led to a split which allowed British intervention, leading to the Civil War in the south and the bloody establishment of the Orange state in the north. When the Boundary Commission finally reported, it was not to award to the Free State those large areas in the 'Six Counties' that had voted nationalist, it was to make further unionist demands! The Downing Street Declaration is the new Treaty, with an identical purpose - to save as much for the Union as can be saved. The British government is using the similar threats and 'promises' today.

For there can be little doubt that secret preparations are going on, involving both London and Dublin, should the Republican leadership reject the Declaration. Internment has always been controversial in the south, but it could be dressed up as even-handed by pulling in U.D.A./U.F.F. and U.V.F. members too. However, the British intelligence services will ensure some of the latter are kept on the loose for clandestine death squad activity. Whilst Dublin would not approve of openly declared war on the I.R.A./Sinn Fein and the nationalist communities, S.A.S. actions and shoot-to-kill operations fall outside the open political arena and can be denied. In the meantime, Riffkind, the Defence Secretary has said, "There were no plans to reduce the 19,500 soldiers in the province" ('The Scotsman' 13.1.94).

The present leadership of the Republican Movement has gone a long way to politically disavowing the revolutionary removal of the British state presence in the 'Six Counties', and accepting the republican legitimacy of the 'Twenty Six Counties', set up as a result of defeat in the Civil War between 1922-4. In the realm of political aims there is less and less to distinguish Sinn Fein from the S.D.L.P.. Hence the wide agreement between them in the Hume-Adams Talks. And there can be little doubt, which of the two partners has conceded political ground. It is the old Sinn Fein demand of a 32 county Socialist Republic that has faded into the Celtic Twilight! Of course, the crucial difference still remaining is the armed resistance of the I.R.A.. As former B.B.C. correspondent, John Cole has stated, "Does anybody seriously think there would have been a Major-Reynolds declaration, an Anglo-Irish Agreement, without IRA violence". (quoted by Suzanne Breen in 'Fortnight' 12.93) It is precisely this difference that Hume, Reynolds and Major want to eliminate.

The demise of national liberation in South Africa and Palestine and the triumph of the 'popular front'

The Republican leadership has been much influenced by developments in South Africa and the Middle East. They hope that political developments there will create a precedent for them. Gone are the days of 'Brits Out', conjuring up images of the Argylls' retreat from Aden, or U.S. service men hanging onto helicopters in the rush to be evacuated from Saigon. The aim is no longer to beat the imperialists but to bargain with them. However, in South Africa and Palestine, the A.N.C. and P.L.O. were the only significant oppositional players brought to the negotiations. Sinn Fein, if it accepted the Declaration, would only be a minor player, alongside the Irish government and the S.D.L.P..

Sinn Fein was late in supporting 'Soviet' backed 'national liberation' politics. This was because of the prominent role played by British and Irish C.P. members in the formation of the Officials, later to become the Workers Party. As a consequence the early Provisionals had quite a Right populist programme. Maintaining Irish-

American support also made an overt pro-'Soviet' position awkward. However, when Sinn Fein backed the 'stalinist' Polish government against Solidarnosc, it was clear that the C.P.'s theory of national liberation had won a new convert. It was their entry into politics during the Hunger Strikes, which gave the new Adams-McGuinness leadership a need for wider ideological support. This is what the C.P. theory provided.

The hallmark of this theory is 'stageism'. This means the working class and most oppressed have to forgo putting forward their own class demands so they can unite in a 'popular front' with the local capitalists against the imperialist enemy. After the local capitalists create a new national state the working class and oppressed are allowed to raise their own class demands - at least according to the theory! Not surprisingly all previous history shows the national capitalist class makes maximum use of this political abstinence to ensure that their new state puts the strongest limits on the development of independent working class organisation or demands. This was certainly the case in the early history of the Irish Free State.

However, in the changed world since the collapse of the Eastern bloc, the stage of 'socialism' has been dropped, even on paper, by nearly all those adhering to 'popular front' politics. The A.N.C. is now committed to building a multi-racial capitalist South Africa. This means restraining and disciplining its most committed support in the poorest townships and 'bantustan' areas, whilst courting the backers of the recent apartheid regime. Its response to the bloody state-backed Inkatha onslaught has not been a revolutionary mass armed mobilisation but a call for the barely reformed apartheid state to implement a 'State of Emergency'. For the P.L.O. even the stage of a united secular and capitalist Palestine has been relegated to the hazy future. Their representatives hope to lead a few Arab enclaves, with little more than local authority powers. The logic of the Sinn Fein/S.D.L.P. alliance is for Sinn Fein to enter the proposed revamped 'Stormont'. So Sinn Fein's united capitalist Ireland stage disappears into the Irish mist. In comes a new first stage - a 'democratic Northern Ireland'! Yet how can the working class unite when it remains divided by an artificial border, a para-military state and an army of occupation? It is only the struggle against these which can ultimately unite the working class politically and socially.

At the 'imperialist bargaining table' with friends like these. Part 1 - the S.D.L.P.

The Republican leadership now face a real dilemma. Their primary aim now is to gain a place at the imperialist bargaining table - alongside Hume and Reynolds, facing the British government and Ulster Unionists, with or without Paisley's D.U.P.. The problem is, once they are disarmed, what do they have left

to bargain with? Should Sinn Fein enter a new electoral alliance with the S.D.L.P., that will only give nationalists one more M.P., under the new proposed boundary changes. The Tories could then be in a stronger position in the 'Six Counties', than they are in Scotland or Wales, as they further cement their present alliance with the largest party, the Ulster Unionists. They have no problems facing down constitutional nationalism 'on the mainland'.

There is now a considerable nationalist middle class in the 'Six Counties'. Much of the pressure to go along with the Downing Street Declaration comes from this source. The spirited resistance from within the largely working class 'communities of resistance' has given a much greater confidence to all nationalists in the 'Six Counties'. However, middle class supporters of the Declaration, particularly in the S.D.L.P., would quite happily cut a deal which abandoned the economic and social aspirations of the working class. The way would be free for them to continue their careers, knowing there would be new openings in a 'reformed' 'Northern Ireland'. Cultural nationalism would be heavily promoted, emphasizing Irish and Catholic identity, in an attempt to keep control of the nationalist working class. Indeed it is central to Major's strategy that much of the policing of nationalists, formerly carried out by the Orange state, should be handed over to moderate nationalists.

From the earliest stage the S.D.L.P. showed their true class colours. In return for a few well paid seats on the short-lived power-sharing Northern Ireland Executive in 1975, they helped to break the rent strike they had initially supported against internment. Thousands of working class rent strikers had to pay back money which was collected from their state benefits. One time S.D.L.P. member, Gerry Fitt, now adorns the House of Lords! The price of any lasting Sinn Fein/S.D.L.P. deal today would be the abandonment of the interests of Sinn Fein's working class supporters.

Some middle class nationalists are not averse to using reactionary demographic arguments to support their position. They claim resistance is no longer necessary, because sometime after the year 2000, there will be a Catholic nationalist majority in the 'Six Counties'. It is quite clear that this view is a denial of traditional republicanism, which sees the Irish nation as a combination of Catholic, Protestant and Dissenter. It is unionism which needs to be politically combatted, not Protestants as such. However, this attempt to limit the Irish nation to Catholics only, as well as helping to hide the considerable class differences in the nationalist camp, also contributes to divide-and-rule politics, since it obviously heightens the fears of the Protestant working class. Meantime of course, we can be sure that the 'Ulster' Protestant identity, despite all its contradictions, will continue to be as assiduously cultivated by unionist politicians. This would still allow an 'understanding' to be reached between the leaders of both camps to protect their shared class interests in a 'reformed' 'Northern Ireland'.

With friends like these. Part 2 - Reynolds

Reynolds, Fianna Fail leader of the Irish government, would like to see the 'Northern Ireland' issue as far down his domestic agenda as possible. Under de Valera and Haughey, Fianna Fail's republican rhetoric was always pronounced, the better to cover its acceptance of partition in practice. De Valera interned Republicans, whilst Haughey continued the Section 31 broadcasting ban on Sinn Fein. Reynolds would like to tone down the rhetoric to match the practice. Reynolds has been quite clear about his support for separate referenda north and south. "Such referenda would help it get rid of articles two and three in its constitution which lay claim to sovereignty over Ulster. A clause would be inserted in the referendum in the Republic binding the south to accept the decision of the north." ('The Scotsman' 16.12.93) In a speech to Irish lawyers, Reynolds said, "Self determination does not have to take the form of unity or independence." ('The Scotsman' 21.1.94).

Much has been made of the secret dealings of the British government with the I.R.A., behind the backs of parliament and Dublin. But Reynolds has been involved in his own secret meetings - with loyalist paramilitaries! He said that, "I specifically refuted any notion that the Irish government were involved in some way or another in a pact to deliver peace in return for joint authority over Northern Ireland" ('The Scotsman' 18.12.93). In other words Reynolds, far from preparing the ground for a united Ireland in the long run, is arranging to break his final paper links with the north. He knows that the Peace Forum promised in the Downing Street Declaration will be boycotted by the Ulster Unionists. From a constitutional nationalist point of view this is even a retreat from the inter-governmental talks in the Anglo-Irish Agreement. The Downing Street Declaration does not contain any guarantees for northern nationalists over anti-Catholic discrimination. Although the rhetoric of Reynolds and Major is different, there is substantial agreement between them on a common 'New Unionist' strategy.

Reynolds of course reflects the interests of the majority of southern Irish capitalists. The E.C.'s 'Single Market' is offering them all the access they need to northern markets, without the liability of refurbishing a run-down economy, providing social provision or policing the working class. The weak southern economy is in no state to afford the £3.66 billion the British government pays annually in subsidies to 'Northern Ireland'. There is no contradiction between southern capitalists' support for a united market and for two states with plenty of draconian powers to deal with any future upsurge in working class struggle. The southern Irish capitalist class is more enthusiastically 'European' than its British counterpart. However, this ruling class is going to give its support to the upholding of the existing Irish and U.K. states' authority, until the E.C. can establish an all-round state authority, which commands as much loyalty as the established member states. In the meantime a brand new cross border leisure

canal link between the River Shannon and Lough Erne is being opened this year, whilst a major upgrading of the Dublin-Belfast railway is planned, both with the backing of E.C. money. These transport services primarily benefit richer holidaymakers or businessmen. However, many workers, small farmers and traders face the reality of roads mined by the British army when they attempt to cross the Border. Depending on your class the Border is a lesser or greater barrier already!

The outlines of a possible deal, which would leave partition even more deeply entrenched, has also been aired. Some nationalists, including Desmond Fennell in the south, believe that northern nationalists should focus their constitutional demands on seeking recognition by the U.K. state of their Irish nationality within the 'Six Counties'. This view satisfies the interests of both the pro and anti-Treaty wings of the Irish ruling and middle classes, who no longer wish to unite Ireland. It also matches the present aspirations of many middle class nationalists in the north. The neo-unionist Opsahl Commission recommendations have urged U.K. recognition for Irish nationality in return for a new 75% constitutional veto on any further change in 'Northern Ireland's status. In accepting this middle class nationalists indicate their willingness to play ball with unionists. They give a nod and a wink to show they also see their main political challenge coming from the unbroken working class 'communities of resistance'. The notion of two separate 'nations' within the 'Six Counties', 'British' and Irish, would divide the working class even more firmly, contributing a new twist to the 'carnival of reaction' brought about by the 1922 partition.

With friends like these. Part 3 - the Clinton administration!

The Republicans other negotiating card must surely turn out to be a joker - the support of the U.S.A. government. To turn to the leaders of a country with such a terrible history of military suppression of national liberation movements is to allow false sentiment to dominate one's thinking. Amongst others, it was Henry Kissinger, principal architect of the later U.S. imperialist policy in Vietnam, who extended the invitation to Gerry Adams! His visit to the U.S.A. was undoubtedly an immediate propaganda coup, but its practical effect on the Clinton administration was to bring it fully behind the Downing Street Declaration as it stands. The temporary lifting of the travel ban on Gerry Adams, also gave Clinton the excuse to drop his promise to send a special envoy to Ireland. This promise was always so much 'blarney' to win Irish American votes in the Presidential election. Even if conceded, the main aim of such an envoy would have been to persuade the Republican Movement to give up the armed struggle, without even any corresponding moves by British forces.

Whilst there is little doubt that the massive U.S. media coverage discomforted the

British government in the short term; in the longer view, the greater freedom allowed to Gerry Adams fits in with Major's strategy of winning Sinn Fein to constitutional politics. This is also why Major is quite happy about Reynolds' 'clarifications' on the Declaration and his lifting of the Section 31 broadcasting ban on Sinn Fein. These are all carrots which can either further draw the Republican leadership into the 'New Unionist' agenda, or if this fails, can easily be disowned, since Major himself has conceded nothing in public.

The Republican Movement - politics subordinated to physical force or physical force subordinated to political and social struggle?

With many influential Republican leaders in jail and with many individual I.R.A. and Sinn Fein members daily experiencing the organised state harassment of the nationalist communities, it is not a foregone conclusion that the Downing Street Declaration will be accepted by the Republican Movement. However resort to alternate military action and limited ceasefires will not provide the 'clarification' the Republican leadership hope to hear. Neither will secret negotiations which the British government can manipulate and disown. The 'communities of resistance' need 'clarification' about what the Republican leadership are really up to, not secret talks with the British government or private agreements between Gerry Adams and John Hume. Without a massive mobilisation by the 'communities of resistance' the 'peace process' will be increasingly on 'New Unionist' terms.

Failure to actively involve the whole 'communities of resistance' will place an old choice before the Republican leadership - 'anti-political' armed struggle or constitutional nationalism. This occurred in 1922 when Sinn Fein split into pro- and anti-Treatyites over the British imposed settlement. It also occurred, after a period of time, when Sinn Fein split into the Officials and Provisionals in 1970. A hallmark of the rejectionist wings on both occasions was a belief that 'physical force' could substitute for meaningful politics. However, in those campaigns where the gun and bomb replaced politics, defeat was the outcome. First came the defeat of the Anti-Treaty I.R.A. in 1924; then of the short-lived bombing campaign against England in 1939; and lastly of the Border campaign from 1956-62. The Republican leadership has admitted that the 1975 Truce with the British government nearly brought it to the point of collapse. This followed the largely apolitical Provisional campaign where the 'bomb and bullet' dominated. It took the opportunity presented by the Hunger Strike for the strategy of the 'ballot and the bullet' to emerge in the early 1980's. However, this has just recreated the conditions where the Republican leadership faces the same choice between following the constitutional road, or falling back on a purely military campaign, with the same likely results as before. Armed struggle must be subordinate to and guided by a revolutionary political strategy.

The revolutionary potential of the national question is at its greatest when it is linked with social demands. The Civil Rights Movement linked democratic demands to the issue of housing. This helped to give it a dynamic that moved beyond its original reformist positions. However, there has been a strong tendency in the Republican Movement to downgrade social issues, which can develop their own dynamic and threaten the first stage of their Republic. As far back as the Irish Civil War, the Republican leader Liam Mellows criticised the dominant anti-Treatyite strategy of confining resistance to military measures. "The Programme of Democratic control (the social programme) adopted by the Dail... {in} January 1919 should be translated into something definite. This is essential if the great body of workers are to be kept on the side of Independence." It was the failure of the Anti-Treatyite Republicans to do this, which enabled the Irish Labour leaders to push a peace policy, which in effect gave support to the pro-Treaty leaders. With present day 'Northern Irish' Labour leaders, aided and abetted by the 'Brit Left' influenced Socialist Workers Movement and Militant, pushing themselves wholeheartedly into the 'peace demonstrations', history is in danger of repeating itself. Are there any 'Liam Mellows' around today in the Republican Movement? The alternative of retreating solely to the early Provisional strategy of the 'bomb and the bullet', will most likely lead to the same defeats as before.

4. The 'Brit Left' and the Union

Labour adapts to Major's 'New Unionism'

The present Tory government is very much a crisis prone government and could yet lose office. However, it is looking more and more likely that any Labour 'opposition' would take on the substantial political thrust of Major's 'New Unionism', if they took office. The bi-partisan approach would continue. They might tack on some aspects of neo-unionism, but as far as 'Northern Ireland' is concerned there would unlikely be major changes, without large scale external pressure. Although the Labour Party has a paper position of 'Irish unity by consent', even this is really only wheeled out to win the Irish vote in certain constituencies. The Labour Party practice has been to consolidate the Union. It was a Labour government that constitutionally guaranteed the unionist veto in 1949. It was Callaghan who put in the troops to uphold Ulster Unionist 'law and order' in 1969. It was Labour which presided over the 'Birmingham Six' and 'Guildford Four' trials. Roy Mason was the Ulster Unionists' favourite Northern Ireland Secretary. Callaghan also entered a parliamentary alliance with the Ulster Unionists to shore up the last ailing Labour government! He increased their parliamentary representation at Westminster. He also, in effect, handed over the running of 'the province' to the military and intelligence services.

However, even the paper policy of 'Irish unity by consent' is now under threat. Labour's own ultra-Unionists who advocate the Labour Party extending its organisation to the 'Six Counties' have been marginalised, in a similar manner to the Northern Ireland Conservatives in the Tory Party. However, the influential Institute for Public Policy Research has suggested a political settlement based on shared authority by the British and Irish governments. However, "to re-assure unionists that such a move was not a stepping stone to a united Ireland a clause would be inserted in the constitution preventing any further change of Northern Ireland's status without the consent of 75% of the electorate" ('Socialist Campaign Group News, Nov. 93). This is a further move on from the Opsahl Commission proposals, which significantly had come up with the same percentage. Therefore both Opsahl and the I.P.P.R. represent a massive reinforcement of the unionist veto.

Entrenching the divisions in the Irish working class

The I.P.P.R. recommendations would further divide the working class of the 'Six Counties', forcing many to give allegiance to one of two partitionist states which many oppose. There "would be a 5 person Shared Authority Council of Northern

Ireland. Three members would be elected from Northern Ireland on the basis of proportional representation: one would be a British MP nominated by the prime minister and one would be a member of Dail Eireann nominated by the Taoiseach. The shared authority would appoint ministers and take over responsibility for defence and security in Northern Ireland. It would be able to call upon both British and Irish armies in support." ('Socialist Campaign Group News, Nov. 93) Therefore the main reason for shared authority is not the traditional constitutional nationalists' hope for eventual unity. It is to provide an effective police force directed against the 'communities of resistance', after the failure of Orange 'law and order'. Instead of one army and police force there would now be two!

Significantly the "authors remain... closely linked to the Labour front bench", although the present Smith position is support for the Downing Street Declaration as it stands. Kevin McNamara, Labour's chief spokesman on 'Northern Ireland', has indicated his conversion from 'Irish unity by consent' to 'shared authority'. The Labour Party is unlikely to move officially to this policy unless it receives the support of the Dublin government. At present Dublin opposes this shared authority option, not least because of the extra expense it would involve them in. However, it still remains as a possible alternative should the Downing Street Declaration become unstuck and if E.C. finances and U.S. approval were given.

Scotland's liberal unionists and constitutional nationalists - looking to a new 'Stormont'

Scotland's liberal unionists and constitutional nationalists are also placing high hopes on a legislative assembly for 'Northern Ireland' as a precedent for Scotland! George Robertson, Labour's shadow Scottish Secretary, has called for the Northern Ireland Assembly proposals to be extended to Scotland. It is some way from the turn of the century radical demand - 'Home Rule All Round' for Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England - to Scottish Labour's apparent new demand - 'Stormonts All Round'! It might harden up the Orange vote Labour cultivates in certain Scottish constituencies though! However, if their hoped for example turned out to be "more like Strathclyde Regional Council", it is likely all support would quickly evaporate! This would be a further success for Major's 'New Unionism' in his attempt to subordinate both Ulster Unionism and constitutional nationalism to his aims. Already there is greater convergence on Tory terms, as Labour supports a reformed Scottish Select Committee, finding it harder to oppose Molyneux's demand for a Northern Ireland Select Committee.

Canon Kenyon Wright, chair of the Scottish Constitutional Convention, has also argued that "the Government has pledged to 'uphold the democratic wish of a greater number of the people of Northern Ireland.' If this is true of such a province, how can it possibly be denied to an ancient European nation like

Scotland?" Then the Canon went on to highlight the dilemma facing constitutional nationalists when the ruling class ignores them. "The bad news is that a dangerous message may be coming through - that bullets count more than ballots" ('The Scotsman' 30.12.93). Gordon Wilson of the S.N.P. has echoed similar sentiments.

The 'Broad Left' - handing over responsibility to U.N. Imperialism Inc.

The traditional 'Broad Left', a combination of the British Labour Left and the old Communist Party of Great Britain, offer no alternative either. They have declined in influence under the combined assault of the 'Capitalist Offensive' and the collapse of the U.S.S.R.. Although their confidence in the ability of the Labour Party and T.U.C. to take on the Tories and the employers is badly dented, the 'Broad Left' remain staunch upholders of the United Kingdom. However, they now look to curious allies to bring about the reforms they think are necessary to maintain 'Britain'. A motion to the Scottish T.U.C. from the 'Broad Left' breakaway union, the Electrical and Plumbing Industries Union, calls for "U.N. supervision on demilitarisation" in 'Northern Ireland'. ('The Irish Post' 23.4.94)

This is in the same week as the British U.N. commander in Bosnia, General Rose, has toyed with the civilian population of Gorazde. His 'safe havens' have become killing grounds, in preparation for the next stage of the ethnic partition, required under the imperialist Vance-Owen Plan. Under the guise of providing 'humanitarian aid', the U.N. removes any control the oppressed have, then cynically enters negotiations with their immediate oppressors, leaving the victims either unarmed or forced to undergo removal. In Bosnia, the fascist militias and the U.N. have come to represent the 'hard' and 'soft' phases of 'ethnic cleansing'. Whether in Kurdistan, Somalia or Bosnia the U.N. has played a reactionary political role, policing 'reservations for the oppressed'.

The pro-Labour 'Brit Left' trapped in a time warp

The trotskyist 'Brit Left' also believes the Union of England, Wales and Scotland is a major gain for the working class. For those, especially in Militant and the Socialist Workers Party, the final proof is the existence of a British T.U.C. and Labour Party, which they claim unites the working class. They are more ambiguous about the position of 'Northern Ireland'. They were happiest when the present struggle in Ireland was in its militant reformist phase - the Civil Rights Movement. When this movement was forced by the British state response to make a choice - constitutional nationalist capitulation or accept armed resistance, this 'Brit Left' majority tried to offer another way - strike action around economic demands. This attempt to recreate the conditions of the early '70s 'mainland'

U.K., where the political situation was much less developed and still totally within a constitutional framework, betrayed both heights of arrogance and depths of ignorance. The idea that it was the resistance in the 'Six Counties' which prefigured the break-up of the U.K. state, rather than the mainly trade union official-led major strikes over here, was beyond the political comprehension of a 'Brit Left' brought up to think about the advanced bourgeois nature of their 'Britain'.

In the early '70s strikers might face heavy handed police on picket lines, but never the guns of the British army, B Specials and later the R.U.C.. Trafalgar Square was still public space for national strike support rallies and political protests against anti-union laws; Belfast and Derry city centres were banned to Civil Rights marchers. It was in the '80s that the 'Brit Left' found out that the British state at least knew where the frontline was. Control techniques learned in the 'Six Counties' began to appear on the streets of London, during the Inner City Riots; in South Yorkshire during the Miners' Strike; and in Trafalgar Square during the anti-poll tax demonstration. The 'Brit Left' was completely unable to deal with this. Harkening back to the good old days of 'push and shove' at the Saltley Gates Depot, during the 1972 Miners' Strike, they urged people, in trainers and T-shirts, to the 'killing grounds' of Orgreave, to meet visored, truncheon wielding, mounted cops. Learning nothing from these defeats the 'Brit Left' still issues tired calls to the trade union and Labour leaders to take a lead. The failure of this 'Brit Left' to offer any challenge to these pro-Crown and unionist leaders has also in its own way contributed to the 'New Unionist' agenda.

Despite the 'Brit Left's harking on about the unity the U.K., Labour Party and T.U.C. provide the working class, they appear singularly blind to the most relevant historical precedent, when confronted with anti-union employers backed by the state. James Connolly's Irish Citizen Army was formed by workers to combat both scabs and the state during the 1913 Dublin Lock Out. At that time Ireland was still part of the United Kingdom, but of course for this 'Brit Left', citizens' armies could provide no example for today - not for her majesty's loyal subjects!

Nowhere does this confusion over politics show up more than in this 'Brit Left's attitude towards fascism in the U.K.. Playing the liberal British card, the S.W.P.'s Anti-Nazi League concentrates its attention mostly on the 'foreign' nature of fascism. The 'Unity' march in Welling called on the British state to close down the nazi B.N.P. H.Q.. After all, swastika armbands and straight arm salutes - "They're just not British"! So the good old British state will surely do the decent thing. In Scotland the S.W.P./A.N.L.'s main concerns have been the proposed Le Pen visit and a monument to Rudolf Hess constructed in Ayrshire. Little is made of the B.N.P.'s connections with loyalists in 'Northern Ireland' and Scotland. The fascist nature of loyalism is denied, despite their responsibility for the deaths of hundreds of nationalists. This attitude is equally true of the Labour Party's Anti Racist Alliance and Militant's Youth Rights in Europe. None of these groups mobilised

when the loyalist/B.N.P. alliance threatened the Bloody Sunday Commemorative marches in London, or the James Connolly Commemorative marches in Edinburgh. The British unionism of the Labour Party, Militant and the S.W.P. makes them blind to the most likely British fascist danger. This comes to the accompaniment of the Union Jack and lambeg drum, not the swastika and goose step.

The anti-Labour 'Brit Left' s opposition limited by acceptance of the 'British' nation

The Downing Street Declaration also presents problems for the minority of the 'Brit Left', which takes a different attitude towards the republican struggle. Some groups offer "unconditional support" for the Republican Movement. The Revolutionary Communist Group and C.P.G.B.-Leninist are the best examples. Their focussing on the Republican leadership rather than the wider republican 'communities of resistance' is a product of the marginalisation of the 'Brit Left'. They can offer nothing concrete to these communities, which could help lift the burden of repression, such as leading agitation amongst British troops to desert or mutiny; or the blockading of troop and military supplies from 'the mainland'. So instead they act as 'cheerleaders' from afar for the actions of the Republican leadership. Turning up on events organised for the 'Irish in Britain', or Easter and August commemorations in the 'Six Counties', can become a substitute for facing up to the real nature of the political challenge to the U.K. state.

The challenge presented by the 'communities of resistance' in the 'Six Counties' is not confined to the political separation of the 'Six Counties' from the U.K.. This may indeed be the challenge the Republican leadership feel they are making. Many opinion polls in 'Britain' also show widespread support for the separation of the 'Six Counties' from the rest of the U.K.. At present the majority supporting this view still don't see the wider implications for the U.K.. For many Labour-voting 'Daily Mirror' readers it is case of getting shot of the 'bloodthirsty paddies'. For the pro-Labour 'Brit Left' it is often a case of breathing a sigh of relief, that they will no longer be disturbed by the unwanted messy politics of a war within their own state. Far better when the political landscape is confined to the comfortably familiar, the good old British T.U.C. and Labour Party! The U.K. ruling class, however, knows that a defeat in the 'Six Counties' would have a knock-on effect for the rest of 'Britain'. The demands for Scottish and Welsh self determination would become stronger. The working class would take advantage of a weakened ruling class to regain the initiative lost in 'The Capitalist Offensive', over nearly two decades.

However, because of their support for 'Britain' and a spurious 'British Road to Socialism', the whole of the 'Brit Left' is singularly ill-prepared to face the

challenge of 'New Unionism'. Whatever the 'Brit Left's position on the Republican Movement - unconditional supporters (R.C.G. and C.P.G.B.-Leninist), critics (S.W.P.), or opponents (Militant), they can all agree that the separation of Ireland is desirable, sooner or later, but please, no further break-up of the United Kingdom. Thus even those 'Brit Left' groups placed in the position of loudly cheering the break-up of the U.K. in Ireland, at the same time loudly condemn the break-up of the U.K. in 'Britain'!

The counter-revolutionary role of the 'Brit Left's Irish supporters - outriders for British Unionism

Militant and the S.W.P. have sister organisations in Ireland, Irish Militant and the Socialist Workers Movement. Like their mentors they want to return to the early '70s, when class struggle was largely played by the rules; when trade union leaders led strikes; and the Labour Party promised reforms. Hence, S.W.M. spokesperson, Eamonn McCann, Chair of Derry Trades Council, has become an enthusiastic supporter of the 'peace process' (codewords for accommodation to the Downing Street Declaration). He claims the real issues are the "loss of the National Health Service, free school books, higher wages and better social welfare provision" (quoted by Gillian Harris in 'The Scotsman' 16.12.93). Workers from the republican 'communities of resistance' have fought as hard as anybody else over these issues. Furthermore, over certain issues they have had more success than their 'mainland' brothers and sisters, who have still not broken from their ever so constitutional trade union leaders. New public housing has been built in West Belfast and Derry in the 1980's, when virtually all such projects ceased on the 'mainland'. This is because the U.K. state sees more clearly than the S.W.P./S.W.M. that the political challenge coming from republican areas is very real. The Tories hoped economic concessions would lower the political temperature. However, in the absence of any real political pressure on the 'mainland', the British government does not feel the need to make any similar economic concessions here.

But McCann goes further, in his attempt to subordinate politics to trade unionism. He says, "At one time unification was the Irish dream. But people get tired of dreaming someone else's dream" ('The Scotsman' 16.12.93). This is remarkable from someone claiming to be a revolutionary socialist. Irish unification has always been part of the programme to create a united working class. Now whilst revolutionary nationalist Sinn Fein's dream united republic may be capitalist, the revolutionary working class 'dream' has been Connolly's 'Workers' Republic'. To achieve this has certainly meant a willingness to fight every economic claim our class makes. However, it has also meant siding with the most oppressed workers, who face state repression as a daily part of their lives. There is no compromise over this to maintain spurious unity with unionist workers. For this leads to

acceptance of their unionist state too. The role the S.W.M. is playing over Ireland mirrors the S.W.P. role 'on the mainland'. Here they have become 'outriders' for the trade union leaders and Labour Party, trying to 'round up' and return to the fold, any workers who are contemplating independent action. In the 'Six Counties', where the immediate political stakes are higher, they have become 'outriders' for British Unionism's attempt to rebuild the 'Northern Ireland' state. This attempt to undermine the resistance is counter-revolutionary.

The U.K. state unites the ruling class and disunites the working class

The U.K. state has only ever united a British ruling class. With the help of the British Labour Party and T.U.C. it has **disunited** the working class of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Revolutionary **Internationalist** unity from below is the working class answer to bureaucratic unity from above. Yet all the 'Brit Left' go to great lengths to uphold the 'progressive' nature of the unity of 'Britain'. They end up as apologists for the U.K. state. For the S.W.P. and Militant, Scottish and Welsh demands for national democracy can be accommodated within her majesty's United Kingdom. For the R.C.P., R.C.G. and C.P.G.B.-Leninist, the Scottish and Welsh nations do not exist. Thus the whole 'Brit Left' is divided between support for liberal and right British unionism.

Those in the 'Six Counties' facing the difficult choice forced on them by the Downing Street Declaration can place a much of the blame for their current predicament on the 'Brit Left'. The biggest 'success' the British state has had, is bottling up the republican struggle, first largely within the 'Six Counties', and then largely within the republican 'communities of resistance'. The main reason tragedies like those at Guildford, Birmingham and Warrington occur, is because there is no effective solidarity 'on the mainland'. This draws the Republican leadership into sanctioning actions which inevitably lead to loss of civilian lives. Sectarian tit-for-tat murders, such as those in South Armagh after the loyalist Whitecross massacre, are also a desperate response to the murderous attacks of British sponsored loyalist death squads. Since any 'convenient' nationalist is considered a potential target for the Crown forces or loyalist death squads, the Republican leadership can make the fatal step to considering all 'Brits' or Protestants as enemies too. It is the lack of a political response over here, to the repression faced by the 'communities of resistance', which allows such deadend retaliatory attacks to appear the only political alternative.

The 'Brit Left's lack of understanding of the U.K. state has reduced their ability to come to the aid of the Irish working class. It has also undermined their ability to resist the Downing Street Declaration, which is part of a 'New Unionist' strategy for the whole U.K.. Hence they are also failing the working class of England, Scotland and Wales.

5. The call for a republican united front

'Communities of resistance' - the pattern of the future

Whilst the 'communities of resistance' remain unbroken there will continue to be working class opposition to the real purpose of the Downing Street Declaration. Even if the Republican leadership is coopted into running a reformed 'Northern Ireland', this will still leave those 'communities of resistance' with most of their aspirations unmet. The U.K. ruling class will not be happy until these communities are taught a lesson and made an example of. Therefore resistance will continue to these attacks; that is the nature of class struggle.

When the class struggle here develops beyond the economic, to encompass the social and political, as it has done in the 'Six Counties', the ruling class will resort to the Crown powers more often. During the anti-poll tax struggle many were detained 'at her majesty's pleasure'. The success of the anti-poll tax struggle, after a decade of defeats, was because it defied the traditional Labour and trade union leaders. This helped to create the beginnings of 'communities of resistance'. Strathclyde has just seen a 97% rejection of Tory water privatisation proposals in a Labour-organised Regional Council referendum. Despite this stunning result, the newly named unionist 'Scottish' Labour Party will be quite unable to act on this mandate. Their previous failure over the poll tax led to widespread resistance and 'no go' areas for sheriff officers. Rebuilding these embryonic 'communities of resistance' is the necessary response to the threat of water cut-offs.

This is the likely pattern of resistance in the future. Whilst anti-trade union laws are a vital part of the present 'Capitalist Offensive', the attacks on the working class and oppressed are much more comprehensive. From the 'Six Counties' to the inner cities and suburban housing schemes, the most oppressed have been prepared to offer the most spirited resistance to these attacks. Indeed, it is only when workers are prepared to act as republicans in their places of employment, by upholding the 'sovereignty' of the workplace branch against the 'sovereignty' of the trade union bureaucracy, that economic struggles can be revitalised again. Those in the economistic 'Brit Left' who continually argue that the best way to move towards the final abolition of wage labour, is to get involved in wage struggles, can not see that the best way to move towards the final abolition of the state, is to get involved in the democratic struggle. Militant republicanism is the immediate political expression of the type of struggle necessary to take on the present 'Capitalist Offensive'.

The first step all revolutionary democrats in England, Scotland and Wales can take, is to understand what is at stake in 'Northern Ireland'. The British ruling

class is very concerned over their lack of control of the 'communities of resistance'. These communities are overwhelmingly working class and such an example would undermine their rule. Repression by itself has not worked, so now an attempt is being made at the cooption of the Republican Movement. The ruling class fears that if this fails it could lead to the complete break-up of the United Kingdom. The Republican Workers Tendency, however, sees this as an opportunity to unite the working class of all the constituent nations from below. If the working class does not take the lead in the break-up of the U.K. state, others will. The consequences of leaving it to nationalists to take the lead in the break-up of bureaucratic multi-nation states can be seen in the ex-U.S.S.R. and ex-Yugoslavia.

The answer to 'New Unionism' is a 'new republicanism'

We are issuing a call to build a republican united front in Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England. We can not let 'New Unionism' isolate the republican 'communities of resistance', through the Downing Street Declaration. The U.K. state can not be decisively defeated from a 'Northern Ireland' base alone, no matter how determined the struggle. Although gains have been made the the British presence has not been removed. This is why the Republican leadership have found it necessary to initiate 'the peace process', which can only lead to a new accomodation or 'Treaty' with British imperialism. Therefore a 'new republicanism' has to be based in all the constituent nations of the U.K. if it is tackle 'New Unionism' successfully. The field of struggle needs to be broadened to confront unionism in each nation. Most importantly there is a need to join the political and social struggles, which is why we see the 'communities of resistance' as central.

Within such a republican united front, the Republican Workers Tendency would openly advocate its own political programme, whilst adhering to democratic principles of organisation. We would expect others to do the same. In our view Ireland remains the key link in the break-up of the U.K. state and the struggle to win workers' republics in each nation. The 'communities of resistance' have additional significance for us. They put much emphasis on meeting real needs and organising alternative provision in the face of a hostile state. Hence they are contributing to the eventual creation of a society which is organised on the principle 'from each according to their abilities, to each according to their needs'.

There is no 'British Road to Socialism', only a republican road to communism. We, as marxists, see the need for a new revolutionary working class analysis, appraisal and debate, leading to new organisation, based on past and current experience, in Ireland, Scotland, Wales, England and indeed worldwide. This pamphlet is a contribution towards this.

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R.W.T. Political Programme are also available for £1.

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