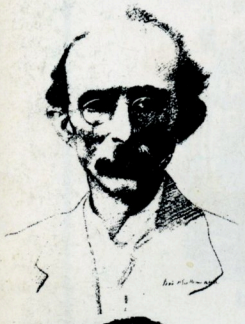
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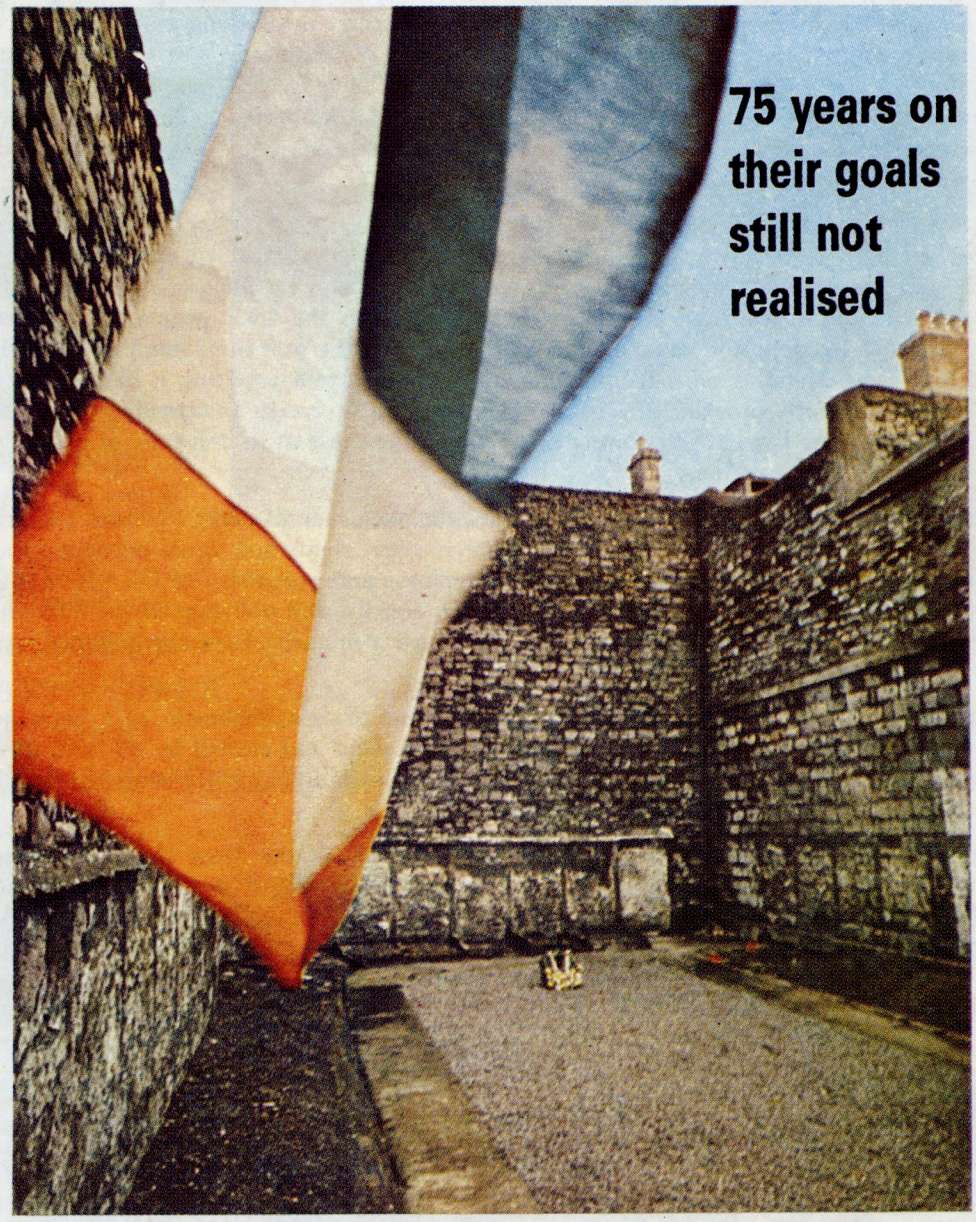
the republican magazine

1916—1991









75 years on their goals still not realised



























POBLACHT NA H-ÉIREANN.

THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT
OF THE
IRISH REPUBLIC
TO THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND.

IRISHMEN AND IRISHWOMEN: In the name of God and of the dead generations from which she receives her old tradition of nationhood, Ireland, through us, summons her children to her flag and strikes for her freedom.

Having organised and trained her manhood through her secret revolutionary organisation, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, and through her open military organisations, the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army, having patiently perfected her discipline, having resolutely waited for the right moment to reveal itself, she now seizes that moment, and supported by her exiled children in America and by gallant allies in Europe, but relying in the first on her own strength, she strikes in full confidence of victory.

We declare the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland, and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies, to be sovereign and indefeasable. The long usurpation of that right by a foreign people and government has not extinguished the right, nor can it ever be extinguished except by the destruction of the Irish people. In every generation the Irish people have asserted their right to national freedom and sovereignty; six times during the past three hundred years they have asserted it in arms. Standing on that fundamental right and again asserting it in arms in the face of the world, we hereby proclaim the Irish Republic as a Sovereign Independent State, and we pledge our lives and the lives of our comrades-in-arms to the cause of its freedom, of its welfare, and of its exaltation among the nations.

The Irish Republic is entitled to, and hereby claims, the allegiance of every Irishman and Irishwoman. The Republic guarantees religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens, and declares its resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and all of its parts, cherishing all the children of the nation equally, and oblivious of the differences carefully fostered by an alien Government, which have divided a minority from the majority in the past.

Until our arms have brought the opportune moment for the establishment of a permanent National Government, representative of the whole people of Ireland and elected by the suffrages of all her men and women, the Provisional Government, hereby constituted, will administer the civil and military affairs of the Republic in trust for the people.

We place the cause of the Irish Republic under the protection of the Most High God, Whose blessing we invoke upon our arms, and we pray that no one who serves that cause will dishonour it by cowardice, inhumanity, or rapine. In this supreme hour the Irish Nation must, by its valour and discipline and the readiness of its children to sacrifice themselves for the common good, prove itself worthy of the august destiny to which it is called.

Signed on behalf of the Provisional Government.

Thos J Clarke

Sean MacDiarmada Thomas MacDonagh.

P H Pearse Eamonn Ceannt

James Connolly Joseph Mc Plunkett

IRIS

the republican magazine

EASTER 1991 *NUMBER* 15



VIEWPOINT

1916 a vision of hope **2**

FEATURES

The 1916 Proclamation — A revolutionary document **4**
By Mitchel McLaughlin

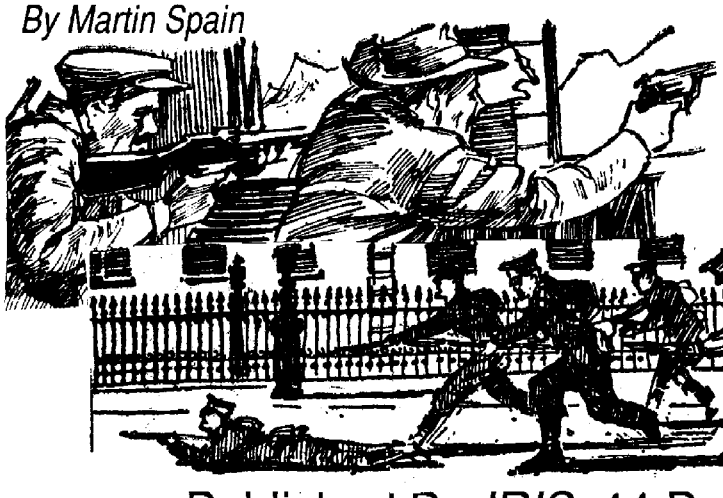
The betrayal of 1916 — Revisionism exposed **7**
By Martin Spain

The radical years — The Labour Movement and 1916 ..... **11**
By Tom O'Dwyer

1916 — The Unfinished Revolution **16**
A Pictorial View Of 1916

Perceptions **34**
By Cliodna Cussen

1916 — What did it mean for Irish women? **38**
By Ursula Barry



ARMED STRUGGLE

Sustained Guerrilla Campaign **40**

War News **42**

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1916 A VISION OF HOPE

ON THIS, the 75th anniversary of the Easter Rising, Irish republicans salute the memory of that despised and slandered minority which lit the flame of freedom on Dublin's O'Connell Street in 1916. We celebrate the courage and determination of those men and women in the face of tremendous odds. We acknowledge their contribution to the struggle for national liberation and we reflect on the significance of that contribution for our own times and situation.

Our celebrations are inevitably tinged with regret, however, that the programme of those revolutionaries, enshrined in the Proclamation, has yet to be implemented. We also regret the reality that nationalist Ireland as a whole will not be commemorating this anniversary and that the revolutionary successors of 1916 are themselves a despised and slandered minority.

A visitor from the United States of America or, indeed, any post-colonial country, might well wonder why the political leadership of the 26 Counties fails to honour in any meaningful way those whose sacrifice forced a British withdrawal from most of Ireland. There is no Independence Day, no fireworks display, no pride. Instead, there is a sense of embarrassment and a fervent wish that the whole thing be forgotten.

How different things might have been had the vision of the 1916 leaders been realised and if we now lived in a *"Sovereign Independent State"*, a Republic which *"guarantees religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens, and declares its resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and all of its parts, cherishing all the children of the nation equally, and oblivious of the differences carefully fostered by an alien government..."*.

The Proclamation was a radical document in the Ireland of 75 years ago and it remains so to this day. It was considered subversive then and is considered equally subversive today. Yet the demands it makes are for basic national and human rights. Failure to achieve those demands has resulted in tragedy for all of the people of this island.

For the people of the 26 Counties, it has meant that real sovereignty has never been attained. Theirs is a state which is unable to stand on its own, a state which has stumbled from one disastrous economic strategy to another and from which one of every two people born has been forced to emigrate.

SMALL WONDER that its establishment prefers to ignore the message of freedom and equality of the Easter Rebellion, given their continued subservience to Britain, and we see a society in which more and more people are forced to exist on meagre welfare payments while others accumulate massive wealth. Lip service is paid to the notion of equality but nothing is done to bridge the widening gap between rich and poor.

Theirs is a censored society in which, as Liam Mellows predicted, the rulers have done everything to prevent unity, sovereignty and equality. After all, some people have done well in the 26 Counties, they have built a power base and will resist any political settlement that threatens their power. That is why they do nothing to resolve the national question but, instead, use their resources to undermine the efforts of those struggling for freedom.

For the unionist population of the Six Counties, partition and the denial of Irish self-determination means that they have been locked into the carnival of reaction that James Connolly warned of. They continue to allow Britain to divide them from their fellow countrymen and women, and remain trapped in a paranoid and reactionary statelet, suspicious of their British masters and hostile to their nationalist neighbours.

Six-County nationalists have suffered most. Partitioned from the rest of Ireland against their will, they have had to fend for themselves in a brutal and sectarian statelet. They have suffered pogroms, discrimination, repressive legislation, and daily intimidation from the forces of the state. Their suffering continues.

We cannot allow this state of affairs to continue. As republicans, we are duty bound to pursue the legitimate aspirations of those who fought and died in 1916. While we remain isolated our task is made virtually impossible. It is essential that we re-create the spirit of nationalist unity which was a feature of the Tan War period and that we build a movement which is inclusive rather than exclusive.

At times the task seems hopeless, but a week is a long time in politics. The Berlin Wall has gone and Britain's border in Ireland will go also. But there is much groundwork to be done first, particularly in the 26 Counties, if the present climate of opinion is to change.

The message is essentially a simple one. We must make clear to our people that the choice before us all is straightforward — the shattered, exploited, poverty-stricken Ireland we live in today or the implementation of the ideals of the men and women of 1916. Their vision of hope is an antidote to the hopelessness which our oppressors use to turn us away from the struggle for what is rightfully ours. We echo the words of Seán Mac Diarmada who said: *"Damn your concessions, England, we want our country"*, and of James Connolly who spoke for the oppressed in every land when he wrote in his song:

"Our demands most moderate are,
We only want the earth!"



● O'Connell St Dublin 1916 — Visitors from any post-colonial country might well wonder why the political leadership of the 26 Counties fails to honour in any meaningful way those whose sacrifice forced a British withdrawl from most of Ireland


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The 1916 Proclamation — A Revolutionary Document

BY MITCHEL McLAUGHLIN

THE 1900s in Ireland were a period of intense political, cultural, and social activity. After the downfall of Parnell and the accompanying swing to the right in nationalist politics, there were few who imagined that within the short space of ten years the poisonous piety of the Catholic middle class would be rapidly, albeit temporarily, dispersed by a revolutionary flowering in culture and the arts, in working-class militancy and in armed separatist planning.

All at once it seemed as if the Irish people had re-awakened from the sloth and despondency engendered by the moral ministrations of the altar-rail-hugging anti-Parnellites.

The Irish people's relationship with their past and with their colonial master was re-examined in a fresh, newly confident, and coherent way. The tactics and policies of the then dominant Irish Parliamentary Party were subjects for critical evaluation. The Irish language, Gaelic games and culture, socialism, separatism, suffragetism, internationalism, revolution, anti-imperialism and Irish freedom were all up for discussion in an open and creative debate. And to compound this national awakening came the First World War with the historically encouraging (if potentially dangerous) thought that England's disadvantage could well be Ireland's opportunity.

Writers, poets, intellectuals, educationalists, soldiers, historians, socialists, trade unionists and workers were all involved in this new debate on Ireland's past and future. This may appear to be an overly romanticised view of the period and undoubtedly there were many Irish people who still sought leadership from Rome, from the benches in Westminster or from Dublin Castle, but it cannot be denied that there was an intellectual and political renaissance in the country. Much of it was determined by Irish people who had studied and been influenced by European socialist thought and who were determined to create a free and just society after the removal of the British colony.

The culmination of that renaissance was the Easter Rising of 1916 and the Proclamation itself represents an uneasy if ultimately reconciled synthesis of separatism, socialism and the religious and cultural aspirations of the period.

On Easter Monday, April 24th, 1916, Pádraig Mac Piarais, President of the Provisional Government and Commandant-in-Chief of the republican forces, declared the Irish Republic outside Dublin's General Post Office.

The Proclamation of the Irish Republic, which he read, declared *"the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland, and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies, to be sovereign and indefeasible"*. It continued, *"The Republic guarantees religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens, and declares its resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and of all its parts, cherishing all the children of the nation equally, and oblivious of the differences carefully fostered by an alien government which have divided a minority from the majority in the past."*

The signatories of the Proclamation understood what they were saying. They had declared a revolution. The Proclamation was generous, magnanimous and politically advanced. Like the United Irish-

men, the Irish nation the signatories envisaged would be pluralist, egalitarian and would embrace all the inhabitants and all traditions on this island. Given the narrow exclusivist nationalism then in vogue throughout a warring Europe, there is no doubt that the Irish Proclamation represented a radical departure and its implicit advocacy of the 'welfare state' has, until recently, motivated most modern European states.

Admittedly, much of the Proclamation is couched in the rhetoric of the time: God, blood, valour and sacrifice were in vogue and were not, as certain historical revisionists would have us believe, suicidally peculiar to Irish revolutionaries. The Proclamation is, in essence, a political programme designed to better the economic and social conditions of the Irish people. It is an early and coherent recognition of, and antidote to, the ravages of colonialism.

WITHIN six short years the Proclamation had become an irritant and an irrelevancy in Irish political life. After the Civil War this Proclamation had become an embarrassment to an Irish establishment, some of whom had actually listened to the Declaration of the Republic outside the GPO and had fought side by side with the signatories.

Within six years the glorious revolution had been drowned in Irish blood, smashed by English guns and money, and strangled by the rosary beads of a Church that seized the opportunity to dictate the future aspirations of the Irish people. The Proclamation had become a distant and meaningless icon, bedecked and confused with the frozen images of the martyrs and the poets, a romantic, doomed gesture from an officially vanished past. Any meaning the Proclamation may have had to the Irish people was speedily removed, its implicit socialism concealed, its relevance denied. It was relegated to the status of a Mangan poem or a Moore melody.

Post-colonial Ireland was viciously sectarian, conservative and sentimental. The Treatyites structured an administration and an infrastructure that merely mirrored that of their past masters. They created an insular society that sought to combine comely maidens and agrarian backwardness with modern trading, economic and investment practices. They succeeded in subduing intellect and intelligence. A submissive population, ruled by Maynooth and greed, was their great achievement. Those who refused to accept the status quo could starve or emigrate. Those who continued to believe in the Irish Republic were allowed to worship the past, but a past sanitised and perverted by the state's ideologues.

The ideal of the Irish Republic and allegiance to the 1916 Proclamation remained a stubborn principle for Irish republicans. In 1991 there are still Irish men and women willing to give up their lives and liberties for that ideal. The republican community views itself as the incorruptible inheritors of that struggle for independence initiated in 1916 and will on occasion, if pushed, offer the Proclamation as justification for the continuing armed struggle in the Six Counties. But let us not be too blasé about our history. Some of the middle-class leadership element within the IRA during the Tan War were only too aware of the radically subversive quality of the Proclamation and while paying lip-service to it they were not swayed by its egalitarian socialism. It was this element that accepted partition.

EACH Easter Sunday, at graveyards and patriotic monuments, Irish people come together to commemorate the events of 1916, and, unfortunately, that often is the extent of their involvement with, and knowledge of, the Proclamation. It could be argued that their reverence for the Proclamation is as misleading and regressive as the Southern establishment's bastardisation and perversion of the Proclamation. Both, for radically differing reasons, are inclined to regard it as a romantic document, far removed from cold reality.

Republicans should always be aware that unthinking allegiance can be as politically damaging as revisionist cynicism. For both sides the Proclamation has become an abstraction although it must be added that the Easter Rising and the Declaration of Independence has an additional significance for Northern nationalists. In a sense the Proclamation serves to preserve the Northern nationalists' sense of identity, of Irishness. It is a badge, an indicator, that points to the possibility of independence being extended across the 32 Counties.

And thus we come to the crux of the matter.

Can the 1916 Proclamation have any relevance to contemporary Irish society? Have we become so obsessed with romantic episodes in our history that we treat them, and view them, in mythic isolation, steadfastly denying that they can offer us a practical and progressive political way forward? It cannot be denied that working-class Irish families do not agonise daily on the sacrifice of the soldiers of 1916. Every time we romanticise struggle

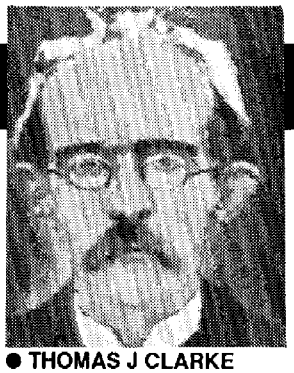


● The ideal of the Irish Republic and allegiance to the 1916 Proclamation remain a stubborn principle for Irish republicans

we consign it to the political attic, dusted off and polished every Eastertime, maybe, but ignored otherwise.

A major fault of Irish republicanism that has developed in the years following the Easter Rising and the defeat of the republican forces in the Civil War has been its preoccupation with tradition. We are inclined to believe that we are 'Irish' and that we are unique, as if Irishness were somehow qualitatively different and better than any other category or nationality. We do not exemplify suffering. We are not keepers of some sacred flame. In the 1990s we are, or should be, a political movement fighting to end imperial rule in our country. And in that task we are no different from anti-imperialist forces in other countries.

The Proclamation of 1916 was a progressive document and an historic document, and above all else a practical political manifesto — nothing more, nothing less. Forget the florid language and the quasi-mystical eloquence. The essential fact to be remembered is that it called for full equality for all citizens, an end to religious and cultural intolerance, and public ownership of the resources and riches of this country. And that is why the Proclamation is still important and vibrant. It presents the Irish people with a real alternative to the centuries of violence, suffering and stultifying conservatism that have been our collective experience.


● THOMAS J CLARKE


● SEAN Mac DIARMADA


● THOMAS MacDONAGH


● P H PEARSE


● EAMONN CEANNT


● JAMES CONNOLLY


● JOSEPH PLUNKETT

THE continuing relevance of the 1916 Proclamation can be confirmed, ironically, in the reaction of the Irish establishment to this cornerstone of modern Irish political life.

The dilemma facing Irish establishment parties after the Civil War was one of legitimacy and that dilemma still confronts the establishment in Ireland. They recognised, to their dismay, that unfortunately for their own political postures it is still a fact that the only legitimising and, in a sense, unifying factor in modern Irish politics remains the 1916 Proclamation. Much as they may detest the revolutionary, armed insurrectionist nature of the 1916 Rising and the Tan War, they cannot avoid it nor publicly reject it if they wish to be seen and respected within an independent Irish context. And so the Proclamation remains sacrosanct.

The signatories can be glossed and sanctified out of reality. The violence can be abhorred. The message can be ignored. But the basic ambivalence about the creation of the State must remain. The Proclamation was a call to arms, a call for freedom and equality, and was indeed, as FSL Lyons has said, *"The point of departure... for all subsequent Irish history"*.

Political legitimacy within the independent Irish context is as relevant now as it was to Cosgrave and O'Higgins. Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael, Labour, the SDLP and the Workers' Party are all stuck with the Proclamation. Without denying the very legitimacy of their own independent existence, they cannot reject the Proclamation. And yet, all the alienation, indifference, and disaffection that has corrupted the heart of 26-County political life can be traced to the erosion of conscience that followed the cynical abandonment of the democratic message in the Proclamation.

The 1916 Proclamation is not a romantic relic nor an irrelevant historical document. It is a real signpost and guide to the development of a truly free and just Ireland. If we study it and translate its message for today we will see that it demands more of us than many might imagine. It contains and advocates a notion of freedom that is all-embracing. If we view it as a serious and relevant declaration of political intent we must accept that it reminds us that freedom carries a heavy responsibility.

FREEDOM for the signatories of the Proclamation includes the freedom to dissent, to reject, and to be different while still being cherished equally as children of the nation. That is real freedom and that is as fine an aspiration as exists in any political manifesto or in any constitution on this earth.

The Proclamation is neither a narrow nationalist tract nor a declaration of a Catholic confessional state. It is the antithesis of reaction and conservatism. It is a generous and potent statement of the achievements possible within a free, united, socialist nation. It remains the basis for Irish unity and for the establishment of the Irish Republic and as such it is the duty of all republicans and democrats to help reinterpret it for today.

THE BETRAYAL OF 1916 — *REVISIONISM EXPOSED*

BY MARTIN SPAIN

MOST IRISH PEOPLE still regard the 1916 Rising as a great moment in Irish history. It is seen as a heroic act of defiance staged to reawaken the desire for Irish freedom, a symbolic military blow for freedom which achieved its ends with the rise of Sinn Féin and the IRA and the subsequent Tan War. The Irish people gave Sinn Féin an overwhelming victory in the general election of 1918. The Tan War saw Britain at last defeated in Ireland, albeit in a limited manner.

The subsequent tragedy of the Civil War and the acceptance of partition by an emergent and reactionary Free State government left a sizeable section of nationalist opinion betrayed, trapped without a voice in the sectarian Six-County statelet. The Free State had accepted partition and by doing so had abandoned Six-County nationalists to their fate. When de Valera's Fianna Fáil acceded to power in 1932 there was a feeling among many republicans, who had openly campaigned for Fianna Fáil during the election campaign, that at last something would be done about partition and achieving national self-determination once and for all. Instead the new Fianna Fáil government merely paid lip-service to Republicanism. De Valera concentrated on removing the last vestiges of overt British rule in the 26 Counties, for instance running down the office of Governor General, provoking the Economic War by refusing to pay any more Land Annuities and abolishing the Oath of Allegiance. On the substantive question of tackling the very real British presence in the northeastern corner of Ireland, de Valera copped out. His Republicanism was one with a very small 'R'. He proved just as adept as his Cumann na nGaedheal predecessors at repressing republicans. He accepted the de facto partition of the country while making pious claims of sovereignty over all of Ireland in his 1937 Constitution.

The revisionist school owes much to the latent sense of guilt felt by the Irish establishment in relation to the Six Counties. The 'I'm alright Jack' approach taken by the leadership in the South to the pogroms, gerrymandering and paramilitary oppression of the likes of the B-Specials suffered by nationalists ruled by the Unionist ascendency from Stormont left the ground ripe for the Revisionist school in the 1970s. Revisionism arrived at a timely moment to legitimise Dublin's inadequacies as the internal contradictions of the Northern state became too much and British troops arrived amidst the debris to supposedly 'stabilise' the situation.

This revisionist school prefers to see 1916 in terms of an anti-democratic blood sacrifice which achieved nothing, preempted the achievement of Home Rule by 'constitutional' means and was itself the wellspring of today's 'murderous campaign of the Provisionals'. Such people as Conor Cruise O'Brien, Garret FitzGerald, Ruth Dudley Edwards, John A Murphy and Ronan Fanning are peddling what is fast becoming the accepted version of history in the 26 Counties. Peter Beresford



● CONOR CRUISE O'BRIEN — a "unionist fellow traveller" and an early exponent of revisionist history

Ellis, in an article in the previous edition of *Iris*, made the point that these historians could be better described as *"unionist fellow-travellers"*.

These respected academics masquerade as providing a 'balanced' view of Irish History. They claim that they can step back from the 'unhelpful' nationalistic emotions which surrounded the struggle for independence. But theirs is as subjective an analysis of history as any socialist's or nationalist's. Their version of history is tailored to support the establishment and the status quo. Theirs is the history of the strong, acceptable to the 26-County establishment and to their friends across the Irish Sea in Whitehall. The reason revisionism is so popular and its advocates get so much space in the newspapers and on television is that their view of history is one which suits the es-

tablishment. This fact should itself promote a healthy degree of suspicion, for theirs is a neo-colonialist view of history, encouraging the Irish people to feel ashamed of the roots of their state and engendering a degree of guilt and deference to our larger and by their reckoning, long-suffering neighbour, Britain.

The past provides us with plenty of facts, but the interpretation of those facts and the choice of what events or personalities to emphasise, play down, ignore, commend or condemn, is up to the individual historian. The study of history is by its very nature subjective. Where the revisionists are dishonest is in peddling their version of events as the objective truth, while dismissing the republican analysis at the same time as propaganda. Their use of language is very important too. The old cliché that one person's terrorist is another's freedom fighter is an appropriate analogy. Historians have a duty to be honest about where they themselves are coming from when promoting a historical interpretation. The cardinal sin committed by the revisionists is in imposing their values on historical events.

Their version of history promotes Britain as an innocent party, if sometimes clumsily arbitrary in its actions, while the militant republicanism through which the freedom of the 26-County state was achieved is put forward as the root of the 'Troubles' in the Six Counties today, which, of course, are entirely the fault of the Provisional IRA and Sinn Féin. The history of republican endurance and sacrifice is derided as the actions of the fanatical few, not content to accept their situation but constantly harking back to the old enemy, Britain, as the source of all Ireland's ills.

The very people who were lauded as revolutionary leaders in 1966 during the state-sponsored 50th anniversary celebrations of the Rising are now dismissed as 'men of violence'. But why has there been such a revisionist push in Ireland?

To answer my own question, the reason there is such fertile ground for revisionist theorising and rewriting of Irish history is precisely because of the horror felt by most Irish people about the present situation in this country. The outbreak of the current phase of the struggle for national self-determination in the Six Counties in 1969 brought the whole question of partition to the fore again. The situation of Six-County nationalists was emblazoned across front pages and television screens the world over as the Civil Rights protestors were beaten off the streets and thousands were burnt out of their homes in a renewed attempt by the loyalist power block to beat the croppies down. But this time the croppies would not lie down. The re-emergence of the IRA, firstly to defend its communities from attack and then moving to the offensive to push the British forces of occupation out of Ireland once and for all, left southerners in a quandary.

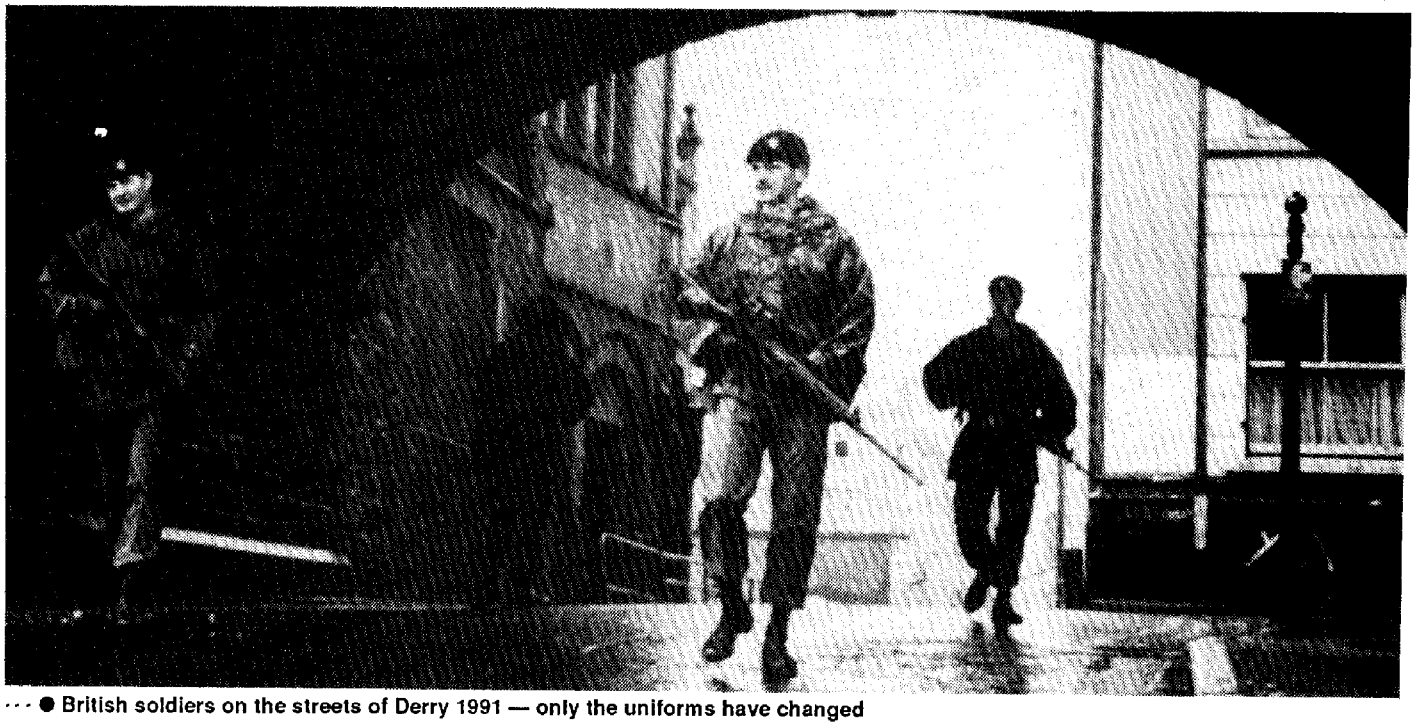


● British soldiers on the streets of Dublin 1916...

There was a genuine feeling throughout the 26 Counties that something should be done in those early years but successive 26-County governments prevaricated and blustered as the world looked on with shock at Stormont's excesses against its minority community. Lynch vacillated in 1969 when he could have sent the troops in, preferring the embarrassing indignity of the arms trials.

The revisionists, with their 'pragmatic' view of history, emphasising the successes of constitutional nationalists and condemning the very military actions which led to the creation of the 26-County state, encouraged feelings of guilt, but not guilt that Irish people had stood back while their fellow nationalists in the Six Counties suffered for 50 years, but guilt at the actions of those who had fought back and continued to struggle for freedom for all. Republicans provided a suitable scapegoat. The revisionist view was one in which the IRA and Sinn Féin are portrayed as the main obstruction to peace in Ireland. This was an interpretation which the 26-County establishment found easily acceptable. Like Pontius Pilate, they could wash their hands of the entire situation by blaming the only people who had consistently opposed partition and the British presence.

The success of the revisionists creates a vacuum, the 26-County state leaving itself in a position where it cannot confidently celebrate its own roots. Its official military parade to be held on Easter Sunday is a hastily arranged admission of the fact that the Irish people have not forgotten 1916. There is no doubt that Haughey and his ilk did not wish to celebrate the Rising this year. The official programme for Dublin's year as Cultural Capital of the European Community did not even mention 1916 and a commemorative stamp to mark the anniversary wasn't even planned until pressure was put on the government. It is an indication of the success of the revisionists that the state saw no problem the previous year in bringing out a stamp to commemorate the Battle of the Boyne. The success of the Reclaim the Spirit of 1916 Committee in organising throughout the country forced the Dublin government's hand. The military parade is the result. Even this small concession is too much for the leader of Fine Gael, John Bruton. He has called for the commemoration to celebrate not just the 1916 Rising but also those who fought in the First World War. This idea should be examined in the context of his vicious anti-nationalism and anti-republicanism. He commented last December that a country ruled by Sinn Féin would be *"an Ireland of prison camps and jails, of secret police and cleansing pogroms"*. That sounds more like a description of the present corrupt Northern statelet. And Bruton and his ilk would do away with Articles Two and



··· ● British soldiers on the streets of Derry 1991 — only the uniforms have changed

Three of their constitution to *"bring about a change in unionist attitudes"*. What Bruton, Haughey, O'Malley and all the other leaders of the 26-County state really fear is a new Ireland where their record will be seen for what it is. The 26-County state is as corrupt as its Six-County counterpart. Constant economic crises, savage unemployment figures and a constant flow of citizens forced to emigrate to earn a living are not the mark of a successful nation state. Homelessness is a major problem. Cutbacks in education and health have widened the barriers of privilege between the haves and the have-nots. A third of the population lives below the poverty line.

The republican analysis is isolated and censored precisely because it points to the promisies of the Proclamation of 1916, to the far-sighted idealism of the men and women who fought for an Ireland not just free of English domination, but where *"all the children of the nation would be cherished equally"*. The moral bankruptcy of the leaders of the 26-County state cannot but be exposed by a proper examination of what 1916 meant and its relevance to today.

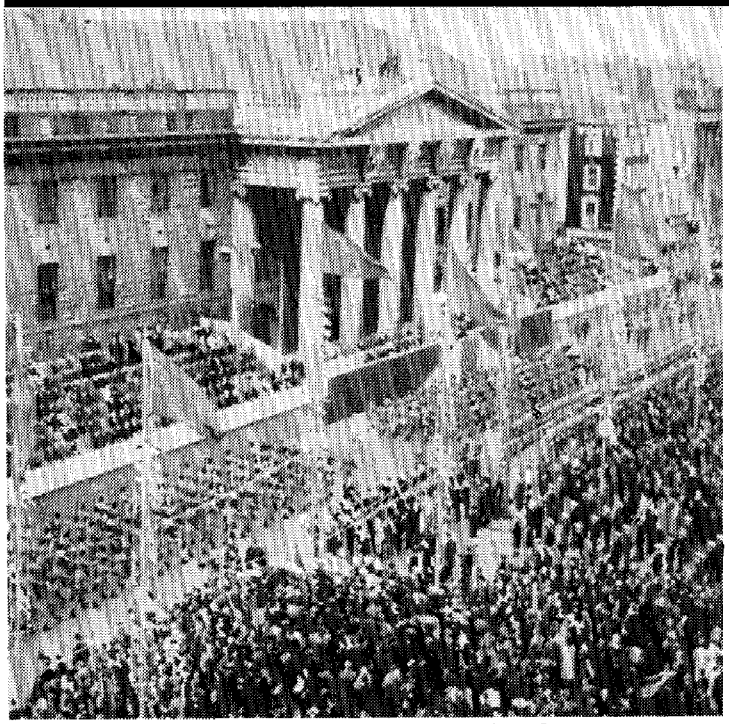
Is there not something fundamentally unhealthy about a state which is reluctant to celebrate its own liberation struggle, only 75 years afterwards? The 26-County state has its roots in the violence of 1916 and the Tan War. This is an indisputable fact. But what the revisionists argue is that the resort to armed struggle as a tactic was wrong then and by corollary, is wrong now. This means that Irish people must now feel somehow ashamed of their roots. Nineteen-sixteen and the Tan War are given less and less prominence in history textbooks in schools while the achievements of 'constitutional nationalists' like Redmond are overemphasized. Pearse commented on O'Connell, perhaps the greatest such leader, that he *"was a more effective political leader than either Lalor or Mitchel, but no one gives O'Connell a place in the history of political thought. He did not propound, he did not even attempt to propound, any body of political truths. He was a political strategist of extraordinary ability, a rhetorician of almost superhuman power. But we owe no political doctrine to O'Connell except the obviously untrue doctrine that liberty is too dearly purchased at the price of a single drop of blood.*

"The political position of O'Connell... was not the statement of any national principle, the embodiment of any political truth — it was an able, though as it happened unsuccessful, strategic move."

However, the military struggle of Irish republicans is not born out of a colonising past but rather from resistance to colonisation. The moral high ground which Britain today increasingly claims in the Six Counties, as an honest broker keeping the 'two warring factions apart', stands in stark contrast to the jingoistic pride with which colonial adventures in India and Afghanistan are proudly remembered and indeed how this latest bloody campaign in the Gulf is already being celebrated with patriotic fervour. Not for the vast majority of Britons moral dilemmas about the use of force.

In contrast, Irish people are expected by our home grown if Anglocentric revisionists to be ashamed of those men and women who took up arms against a massive military machine in 1916, and who fought, not for oil or territorial aggrandisment, but simply for an end to occupation and repression by Britain. The English citizen's self-confidence in his or her nationality is not one which is commonly echoed in Ireland, despite the fact that military force as a tactic has been used here only as a last resort to achieve freedom for our people. The armed revolt which was 1916 was employed not to crush an opposing community but to strike a blow for freedom and equal rights for all, as even a peremptory glance at the Proclamation shows. Britain's bloody imperial past, meanwhile, is one of the slaughter of successive races of 'restless natives' the world over. The ships of the British Empire, carrying merchants, soldiers, bureaucrats and missionaries, brought with them an alien civilisation and religion and took cheap labour and raw materials. They also brought the military hardware to enforce this raw deal. And those who took up arms against such domination then, as those who employ the same tactics today, are denigrated as narrow-minded and anti-democratic militarists. The entirely anti-democratic nature of an Ireland under British rule is not to be considered when castigating the men and women of 1916, as with Oglaigh na hEireann today, for having no mandate.

This whole argument as to mandates is one which the revisionists are very fond of. They reduce democracy to the concept of majority rule; the undemocrat-



● 1966 The 50th Anniversary Commemoration Ceremony was a national celebration

ic imposition of partition they accept as a fait accomplit, while at the same time the in-built unionist majority in the Six Counties is also accepted as a reasonable democratic block on Irish unity. Revisionists have no problem accepting the argument that there can be no Irish unity until *"the people of the Six Counties will it"*. That the concept of democracy is as much about protecting the rights of minorities as guaranteeing a permanent sectarian statelet against the wishes of 40% of the people of the Six Counties is rejected in this context in favour of majority rule, because in this situation it suits them to take this line.

Likewise, 1916 is attacked because nobody went out beforehand and received a 51% majority in an election in favour of such a tactic. But the Easter Rising took place in a country under foreign occupation. Few would argue that most Irish people didn't desire freedom. The continuing support for the Irish Parliamentary Party up to 1914 and the willingness of so many to fight another country's war in the killing fields of Flanders in the hope that this sacrifice would result in the granting of Home Rule is evidence enough of that aspiration. The role of the vanguard in any revolution has, by necessity, been a minority pursuit.

Yet 1916 demonstrated to the Irish public the true nature of the British presence in Ireland. The tendency of most people to accept the status quo was challenged by the audacity of the Rising itself and more so in the weeks following the Rising as the British responded with typical mailed fist, executing the leaders and others. People felt a sense of outrage at Britain's brutal crushing of the rebellion, despite the comments of certain sections of the press. The Catholic Church condemned the rebels, although it jumped on the nationalist bandwagon later, eventually choosing the right side as usual, the Free State victors. The *Irish Times* said that: *"The insurrection was the work of a minority. Ireland as a whole regards it with dismay and horror. She is burning to repair the shame, and make herself worthy of her gallant sons in France."* According to the *Irish News* on May 4th, as the executions continued in Kilmainham: *"The whole sad business was conceived and planned, and carried into fatal effect, without the knowledge or sanction of the Irish nation. Had it been possible to take a vote of the people of the country on the issue, 99% of them would have declared against such an attempt without hesitation, and with all the power of protest they could muster... The wise counsel of earnest and patriotic leaders will not be flouted henceforward by the 'hot-headed' members of the Irish community... Our confidence unimpaired and our faith imperishable in those leaders remain. With them is Ireland's certainty of freedom."*

It is to such establishment views of the time that the revisionists of today draw attention and agree. Such views, though, were soon to be swamped as the executions awoke a sense of outrage among Irish people. The intention of enforcing military conscription on Ireland similarly aroused a national sentiment which culminated in Sinn Féin's sweeping victory in the 1918 elections (and the later increased mandate in the local government elections of 1920) and the demise of the Irish Parliamentary Party which was seen increasingly as an irrelevant failure. Sinn Féin's exhortation to Irish people that they had the right and the ability to take control of their own destiny promoted a degree of self-confidence. Self-confidence is that one quality which a colonised nation lacks. The Rising came about as a direct result of the self-confidence engendered by the cultural revival movement; the reclaiming of an Irish identity, whether through language, sport, music, writings or poetry. The Citizen Army, which played such a vital role during Easter Week, had its roots in the titanic struggle of labour against capital during the Lock-out of 1913 when so many people starved but held out for so long against the monetary might of the employers and their leader, William Martin Murphy. The Rising itself provided the spark which led eventually to guerrilla war and Irish military commanders travelling to London to negotiate with the British Cabinet. 'Talking to terrorists' was a policy which the British government continued in the 1970s although we hear many pious pronouncements now about how this well-tried policy is an inconceivable option.

In conclusion, the modern-day success of the revisionists owes much to the failure of the 26-County state to even come close to achieving the aspirations contained in the Proclamation of 1916. Dublin accepted partition and is unwilling to confront the situation today in the Six Counties in any realistic manner. Subservience to the British through the Hillsborough Agreement has led to Dublin keeping mum on such issues as the Birmingham Six, shoot-to-kill, collusion between crown forces and loyalist death-squads etc etc.

The Proclamation of 1916 is a fascinating document. Its programme for real revolution in Ireland was echoed in the Democratic Programme of the First Dáil in 1919 but was abandoned by the Free State government in 1922. Its aspirations were far too radical for the reactionary combination of Catholic Church and conservative elements which was the Free State establishment. Their primary objective was to crush republicans, to make their peace with Britain and, most importantly, secure their new position of power within the confines of what the British had conceded, no more than that. This they hold, but they have no right to the mantle of inheritors of 1916. Republicans continue to claim that mantle and look to an Ireland free from foreign domination and respectful of the civil and religious liberties of all its citizens. Charles Haughey, during his Presidential Address to the recent Fianna Fáil Ard Fheis, quoted that section of the Proclamation which promises to *"cherish all the children of the nation equally"*.

Rather than pay lip-service to such aspirations, republicans aim to make them reality.

THE LABOUR MOVEMENT AND 1916



● *The courage of the Dublin workers during the 1913 Lock-Out was admired by radicals the world over*

The radical years

BY TOM O'DWYER

HISTORIAN Joe Lee notes that — with the banking system — the Irish trade unions formed one of the two main British economic institutions inherited by the 26-County state in 1921. To some, it might seem like sacrilege to lump the movement of Larkin and Connolly in with the City of London. But Lee's point is certainly borne out by the behaviour of the labour movement in the wake of 1916.

With Connolly executed and Larkin abroad, it was suddenly as if they had never existed. The stolid bureaucrats who dominated the labour movement before the arrival of James Larkin from Liverpool and James Connolly from Edinburgh, sensed that their time had come round again.

It was an extraordinary change. During the first 16 years of this century, Irish trade unionists were in the vanguard of the European working class. Their courage and the flair of their leaders earned the admiration of radicals the world over. Within five years of the Rising, however, it was another story. Radicalism had turned into reaction. The Irish trade unions had meekly accepted partition.

James Connolly foretold that reversal. He warned that:

"The betrayal of the national democracy of industrial Ulster, would mean a carnival of reaction both North and South, would set back the wheels of progress, would destroy the oncoming unity of the Irish labour movement and paralyse all advanced movements whilst it endured."

The core of the problem was that the ITUC and, later, ICTU leaders, awarded loyalist politicians a veto over the political agenda of the labour movement. They sought, above all else, to 'preserve the unity of the trade unions', by which they meant nothing more than merely persuading loyalist workers to remain in the same trade union networks as their Catholic neighbours. They traded a paper unity for the real, political variety. They sacrificed any serious commitment to the reunification of Ireland, fearing that loyalists might leave unions which openly espoused the political objective of national democracy. 'Gas-and-water socialism' became the watchword of labour.

The reasons for the growth in radical

trade unionism at the beginning of the century are clear enough. Dublin was one of the poorest and most disease-ridden cities in Europe. The average death-rate for the whole of Ireland between 1901 and 1910 was 17.3 people per thousand of the population. But, in Dublin, it was 24.8 and this figure was among the worst in the entire British empire. Infant mortality vied with tuberculosis as the main killers in the fearful slums where whole families lived in one room.

For 30 years, the economy had been in a deep depression. Booms in Britain seemed to have little effect on the economy of Ireland, outside Belfast. Dublin was primarily a trading rather than an industrial city. Most of its workforce was involved in transport of one sort or another and was considerably worse paid than in Britain. Although demand for the agricultural produce which flowed through the city and its port fluctuated from time to time, it was relatively constant.

But the size of that workforce was not. The move towards grazing by the large landowners had driven considerable numbers of families from the land. They arrived in Dublin, creating a massive pool of unemployed and under-employed people.

This huge and miserable under-class was entirely without leadership in the years before the arrival of Larkin and Connolly. The unions were largely controlled by the skilled trades and they tended to look down their noses at the unskilled transport workers. No trade union even sought to organise the unskilled.

Dublin trade unionists tended to look to the Irish Party in Westminster to 'safeguard' their interests — something which both Connolly and Larkin satirised bitterly. There was literally no attempt to harness such economic discontent politically.

The growing national movement watched this squalour — the product of years of colonization — with a sense of horror. The only way to rid Ireland of such injustice was to break the link with Britain. With the arrival of Larkin, the poor were given hope and acquired the confidence to take their future in their own hands. The national struggle began to gain a new impetus. The sympathetic strike weapon brought about a revolution in the way the Dublin working class thought of itself.

True, Arthur Griffith did condemn Larkin and Larkinism. He claimed that *"not the capitalist but the policy of Larkin had raised the price of food until the poorest in Dublin are in a state of semi-famine"*. But Griffith, who sought a dual



● JIM LARKIN

monarchy whereby Ireland and Britain would be separate states under the same king or queen, was far from being a republican.

By contrast, every one of those who were later to sign the 1916 Proclamation voiced his support for the IT&GWU during the 1913 Lock-Out. Irish Freedom, the republican newspaper, was quite clear where it stood:

"The cause of Irish liberty is more the cause of the people than the plutocrats and the new Ireland we work for will not be governed by money-bags."

The extraordinary series of strikes and victories for working people which led up to the 1913 struggle, was part of a movement which was affecting the whole of Western Europe. The Scottish revolutionary Harry McShane, records that: *"The Dublin strike was a high point of struggle before the 1914-1918 War."*

Formally speaking, it is true that the IT&GWU was defeated in the Lock-Out. Members had to seek their jobs back while renouncing the union. Larkin's own



● JAMES CONNOLLY

behaviour after it would also argue for this conclusion. He left the country in 1914, a victim of nervous exhaustion, deeply demoralised by the outcome of the Lock-Out and of his own union-building efforts. He was not to return to the country until the dying months of the Civil War.

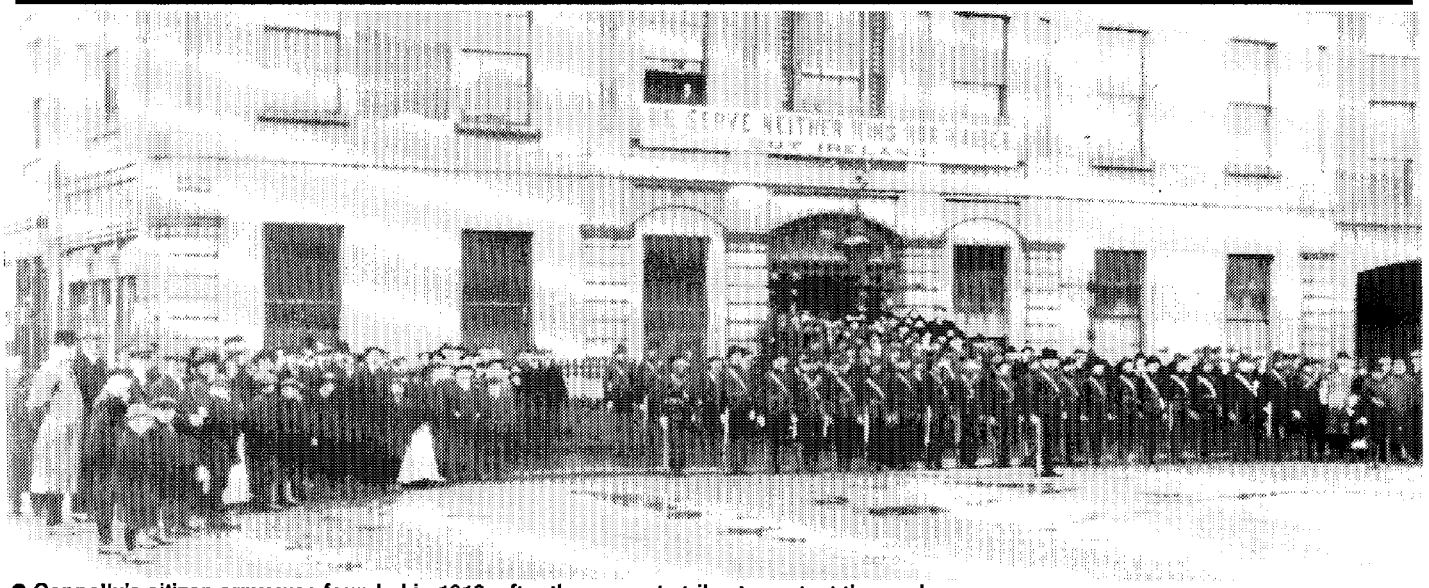
But the extraordinary growth in the union's membership after 1913, the formation of the Irish Citizen Army and the role which its members played in 1916, would suggest that the results of the Lock-Out were far from being entirely negative. In fact, the most important effect of 1913 was that it made clear to the most advanced trade unionists that their rights could only be secured within a united and free Ireland.

The failure of the British trade union leadership to back the calls for solidarity made by Larkin and Connolly, was the bitterest pill of all to swallow. Even radicals like Ben Tillett and the miners' leader Bob Smillie, voted against. Their perspectives were, however left-wing, still limited to parliamentary struggle. Outright support for the Irish at this point would have meant going far beyond that, so Irish trade unionists were left to fend for themselves. It was a lesson Connolly was quick to expand upon.

Connolly's view, expressed after the heat of battle had cooled, was that the Lock-Out was *"a drawn battle"* in which the employers lost a considerable amount of ground as well as the union. But the *Irish Times* — speaking from an entirely establishment point of view — summarised the situation even more precisely:

"The settlement of the strike has, in fact, settled nothing. The very necessary business of 'smashing Larkin' is successfully accomplished; but that is very far from being the same thing as 'smashing Larkinism'. There is no security whatever that the men who are now going about their work brooding over the bitterness of defeat will not endeavour to reorganise their broken forces, and, given another leader and another opportunity, stike a further and a more desperate blow at the economic life of Dublin."

Connolly grasped this point and determined to channel the grievances of the labour movement into national revolution in conjunction with the most radical elements of the national movement. The Irish Citizen Army was largely his creation and its *"first and last principle"* was *"the avowal that the ownership of Ireland, moral and material, is vested, of right, in the people of Ireland"*. Its origins were as a defence force for labour during the Lock-Out, but it rapidly moved away



● **Connolly's citizen army was founded in 1913, after the general strike, to protect the workers**

from a purely defensive posture.

Between 1911 and 1916, the Irish Transport & General Workers' Union represented the cutting edge of the Irish working class but it certainly did not represent all of the labour movement. Connolly was later to describe it as *"the one labour organisation aggressively active on the true nationalist side"*. Meaner spirits than those of Connolly and Larkin dominated most of the other unions and the mass of trade unionists had yet to grasp the full implications of Connolly's stand.

Frank Robbins, a member of the Irish Citizen Army, probably summed up the consciousness of most people when he wrote in his autobiography that *"the bulk of trade unionists"* held *"their trade unionism and their nationalism separately"*. They did not share in Connolly's attempt to unite the national with the trade union struggle.

Robbins was not saying that most trade unionists were against the national struggle, but that they did not see their unions as forces within that struggle. For the vast majority of trade unionists — then as now — unions were only for getting better working conditions. They simply did not see that trade unions have a vital political function and that trade unionism which is restricted to the economic sphere isn't worthy of the name. The tragic fact is that, between 1916 and 1922, men like Thomas Johnson were able to reign in the unions, leaving political control in the hands of those such as Griffith, Cosgrave and de Valera.

The rapid growth in the trade union movement in the first decade-and-a-half of the century shows that people were learning new lessons very quickly. That growth took place as the national movement was becoming more and more determined to take a radical stand. There can be no doubt that had the leadership of the labour movement adopted James Connolly's line, the failed political 'settlement' of 1921-'23 would have been very unlikely.

Just how backward many of these leaders were is shown by the result of the discussion on the formation of an Irish labour party at the 1911 conference of the Irish Trades' Union Congress (later to become the ICTU). William Walker, a loyalist trade union leader from Belfast, opposed the motion and won the day by 32 votes to 29, arguing that Irish trade unionists should simply affiliate to the British Labour Party.

James Connolly was able to reverse this decision at the following year's conference in Clonmel, County Tipperary, but this did not mean his fellow union leaders shared his and Larkin's political stance. The publication of the Home Rule Bill earlier that year, made the prospect of a separate parliament a likelier one in the eyes of the delegates. The absence of political organisation among Irish trade unionists became more glaring.

Walker, who believed that municipal ownership of the waterworks and the gas company were what socialism were all about, and who also supported a Protestant monarchy, was a particularly dimwitted reformist. But others such as Thomas Johnson showed a greater subtlety.

Johnson was, like Larkin, born in Liverpool — but there the similarities ended. Constance Markievicz once described Larkin as a *"great primeval force rather than a man"*. As he spoke *"it seemed as if his personality caught up, assimilated, and threw back to the vast crowd that surrounded him, every emotion that swayed them, every pain and joy they had ever felt"*. Tom Johnson was totally and precisely the opposite of that. Quiet and undemonstrative, even when under attack, he had the personality of a bureaucrat.

The man who became chairperson of the ITUC and later head of the Irish Labour Party, described himself as *"Liverpool-English"* as opposed to *"Liverpool-Irish"*. Although he had been active in the political organisation which persuaded James Connolly to return to Ireland from the United States, he was steeped in the ways of the British labour movement and shared little of Connolly's vision.

Johnson was a commercial traveller by trade and had very little in common with working-class trade unionism. Never in his career did he lead a strike. The reasons for his rise within the ranks of the labour movement were his connections with the Socialist Party of Ireland in Belfast and his meticulous attention to detail. JJ Lee points to his *"political ineffectuality"* but also notes his success, judging that he *"did much to consolidate the Free State as a conservative régime"*.

He played exactly the right tune for those in power, both within the Irish trade union movement of the early part of the century and later on. But that was not the only reason for Johnson's success. The truth was that, although Larkin was a brilliant orator and a courageous leader, he was also extremely erratic. Cautious, plodding characters such as Johnson are often chosen to balance out figures like *"Big Jem"* Larkin. When Larkin left the scene in 1914, Johnson was able to quietly consolidate his power.

The way in which the ITUC responded to the First World War showed both its strengths and its weaknesses. The influence of the IT&GWU was seen in the fact that it was the only body of its kind in Western Europe to declare that the purpose of the 'Great' War was *"the aggrandisement of the capitalistic class"* and to take a resolutely anti-war stand. Every

one of the other union congresses followed the drums of war.

But the hand of Johnson was equally clearly seen when, as chairperson of the ITUC Executive after the departure of Larkin, he persuaded his colleagues to abandon their plans to hold the regular annual conference in 1915. Johnson's fear was that loyalists who supported the British side would come into conflict with Connolly and his supporters.

Although Larkin was later to vilify Tom Johnson as the sole reason for the betrayal of radical trade unionism in Ireland, the new ITUC chairperson was really just a compromiser in the middle ground of the Irish trade union movement. He would have been regarded as quite radical in his native England for his resolute opposition to the war and to violence in general. He even toyed with the notion of forbidding the transport of Irish food to Britain as a protest against the war.

He did not share Connolly's attitude, adopted by the IT&GWU, of opposition to *"both King and Kaiser"* and was fundamentally opposed to using England's difficulty as Ireland's opportunity. In his heart of hearts, Johnson remained on the British side of the conflict. Like the British TUC, he claimed that the cause of 'democracy' would be 'better served' by a British victory than by a German one. He seemed oblivious to the fact that the German trade unionists were arguing, just as persuasively, the exact opposite case.

By comparison, that of Larkin was crystal clear. In his union's newspaper, *The Irish Worker*, just before his departure to the US, he gave the tersely worded anti-conscription message:

"Stop at home. Arm for Ireland. Fight for Ireland and no other land."

If the disagreements between Larkin and Connolly, on one side, and Johnson on the other, were placed before the mass of trade union membership at this time, it is clear that Larkin would have won the day. The respect in which he was held, ensured he always did. But Larkin was not there to argue his point and Connolly's revolutionary politics were not shared by the rest of the IT&GWU executive in 1915-1916. In April 1916, the new General Secretary's proposal to fly the green flag over Liberty Hall was, at first, rejected by the executive and was only agreed to after Connolly threatened to resign.

The general temper of Irish rank-and-file trade unionists was considerably more radical than their leaders, with the exception of Connolly. In order to keep their forces in check, leaders like Johnson were forced, on occasion, to make rhetorical commitments to action — commitments which were never to be carried out.



● **Tom Johnson** (right) **and his colleagues on the leadership of the ITUC ditched the radicalism of Connolly and of Easter 1916**

There can be no other explanation of the ITUC's reaction to the Curragh Mutiny. British officers had refused to move against the loyalists who were arming themselves against Home Rule. Nationalist Ireland was enraged and the ITUC, as usual, went with the tide — even threatening armed action. The normally meek-mannered Johnson drafted its response:

"If it is lawful for Carson to arm, it is lawful for us — the workers — to arm ... if it is right and legal for Carson to fight, then it is right and legal for us to fight for economic freedom.".

The implications of partition were also clear to those such as Johnson, who accurately forecasted its effects in a letter to Arthur Henderson, leader of the British labour movement:

"Dissension will arise immediately both in Ireland and in Ulster. Instead of one problem, we will have two and the coercion of a greatly strengthened radical nationalist party (or, perhaps a physical force party) will be the first awful business of the new Irish government".

Yet, five years after this letter, Johnson was to lead the opposition Labour Party into Leinster House, parliament of a partitioned state, and watch helplessly as the government of that state enforced the coercion he warned about.

Johnson and — with the exception of the Irish Citizen Army — the movement he led, were passive spectators of the events of Easter 1916. With a typically methodical attention to detail, the ITUC chairperson kept a diary of what happened to him while the Rising was taking place and, although he makes no judgements about the event in those pages, it is an extremely revealing booklet.

On Easter Monday, Johnson was on his way back to Ireland from a trade union conference in Britain. He intended to take the ferry from Holyhead to Dublin, so as to get to the Spring Show where his company had an exhibit. Boats to the North Wall had been cancelled (Reason given: "Revolution in Dublin") and the leader of the Irish labour movement decided to try to get one to Kingstown (Dún Laoghaire)— *"very important (financially) for me to attend"*, he notes.

Throughout this diary, he shows only a concern with himself, despite the implications for those such as Connolly, whom he knew well:

"I feared that, if there had been an outbreak in Belfast [where he was living] the authorities would arrest all persons who might be suspected of having any commu-

nications with the rebel leaders in Dublin. Several trade union leaders might be implicated and my association with them — however innocent — might require explanation."

Following the Rising, William O'Brien and PT Daly were arrested and taken to Frongoch, although they played no part in the events. According to his own papers, the most senior Irish trade unionist seems to have restricted his efforts to trying to secure their freedom and that of the pacifict Francis Sheehy-Skeffington whom he did not know had been shot.

The fate of Connolly seems not to have concerned Johnson. No appeal was heard from the ITUC for clemency in the case of the leader of the largest Irish union and Connolly went to his death in a wheelchair without even a verbal statement of regret from the leadership of the movement to which he had given so much.

The comfortable, right-wing union leaders whom Connolly and Larkin had troubled so much over the years were now in control again.

At the Dublin Trades' Council which followed the Rising, condolences were expressed to the relatives of the three leading trade unionists who died. Peadar Macken of the house-painters' union, was a member of the IRB as was Richard O'Carroll, leader of the labour group on Dublin Corporation. Interestingly enough, the condolences for Connolly came last and those who died in the Flanders slaughter were also commemorated. Scores were being settled.

Addressing the ITUC conference that year in Sligo, Johnson adopted a similar strategy to that of the DTC. There were honeyed words about honouring Connolly's work and revering his memory, but the struggle in Dublin was again placed on a par with the senseless carnage of the trenches.

From the United States, where he had been campaigning against the war, Larkin issued his response to Easter 1916:

"It must be admitted that the most glorious thing that has happened during this carnival of bloodlust in Europe, was the self-sacrifice and devotion of these men to a cause which they believed in". But, at home, an agenda very different to his had been adopted by labour leaders.

The Irish Citizen Army was placed into cold storage while Johnson and his colleagues went about their work of cutting politics out of the unions. In an important, if not totally accurate phrase, Johnson was later to speak of how his colleagues had *"subordinated the claims"* of the labour movement to the struggle for independence.

That was not strictly the case. The labour movement was subordinated at a political level to the very *"conservative revolutionaries"* who were about to set up the Free State. The unions were to play a major role in the anti-conscription campaign. But the political agenda and the crucial decisions were to be left to others and the radicalism of Connolly and of Easter 1916 was to be ditched.

That, and not a commitment to the national struggle, was what lay behind the decision by the ITUC not to contest the 1918 general election in which Sinn Féin gained over three-quarters of the vote throughout all 32 counties. Had the labour leaders been really committed to that objective, they would hardly have been satisfied with what emerged in 1921-1922.

Instead, they decided that the Treaty was to be accepted. Larkin might rail from America, demanding *"the rejection of this foul and destructive bargain"* and wishing *"the fate of Judas"* on those who signed it. But Johnson, William O'Brien and those who had moved into positions of importance in Big Jem's absence, scented a political future for Labour.

In the 'Treaty Election' of 1922, Labour did make gains with 17 Leinster House seats. But by simply taking part in the assembly, it gave the Free State a respectability and a credence it did not previously have. By entering its doors, he had totally broken the last link with the politics of the Irish labour movement in its radical years. It also enabled Cosgrave and O'Higgins to enforce one of the most conservative régimes in Europe.

The Irish labour movement had failed in its greatest challenge and was to be marginalised in the years which followed. Yet the tradition of Connolly and Larkin, of the Citizen Army and the early years of the IT&GWU, remains as an opposition within the unions, constantly mocking the pretensions of those who now hold power. It is still waiting in the wings and the heirs of Tom Johnson know that.



● **National executive, Irish Trade Union Congress and Labour Party, June 1914. Standing** (left to right)**: James Connolly, William O'Brien, Michael J Egan, Thomas Cassidy, William E Hill and Richard P O'Carroll. Sitting: Thomas MacPartlin, David R Campbell, Patrick T Daly, James Larkin and Michael J O'Lehane.** (Thomas Johnson, also a member, is not in the group)

1916 — The Unfinished Revolution

A Pictorial View of 1916



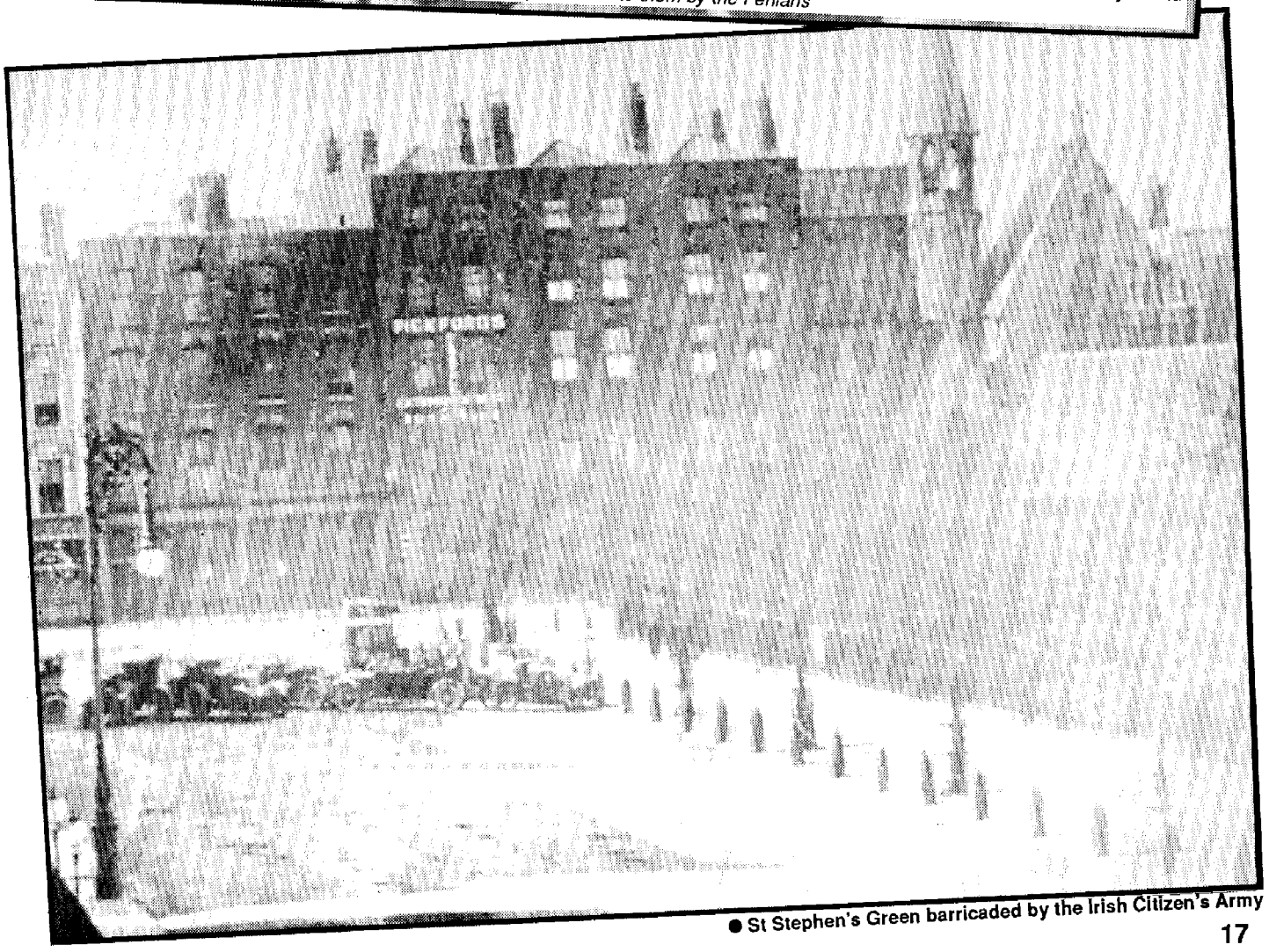
● *Irish Volunteers drilling with 'Howth' rifles*



● *2,000 rifles for the Irish Volunteers being unloaded from the Asgard in Howth in 1914*



● *P H Pearse* (on left in uniform) *delivers the oration over the grave of O'Donovan Rossa. He spelled out the course the volunteers were to take when he warned the British that they would carry out the task passed on to them by the Fenians*



● St Stephen's Green barricaded by the Irish Citizen's Army



● Volunteers at a barricade in the centre of Dublin during Easterweek 1916



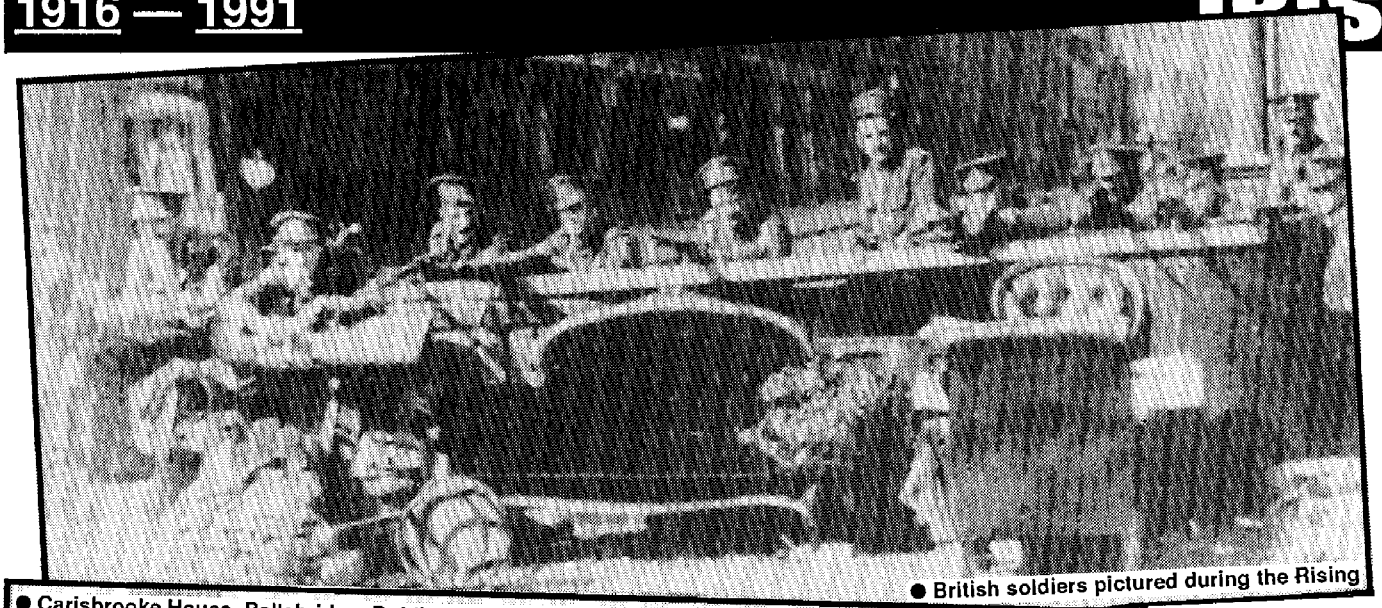
● British soldiers behind a barricade on the Quays



● *The bombed out and burnt out shell of the GPO, Dublin, in the aftermath of the Rising*

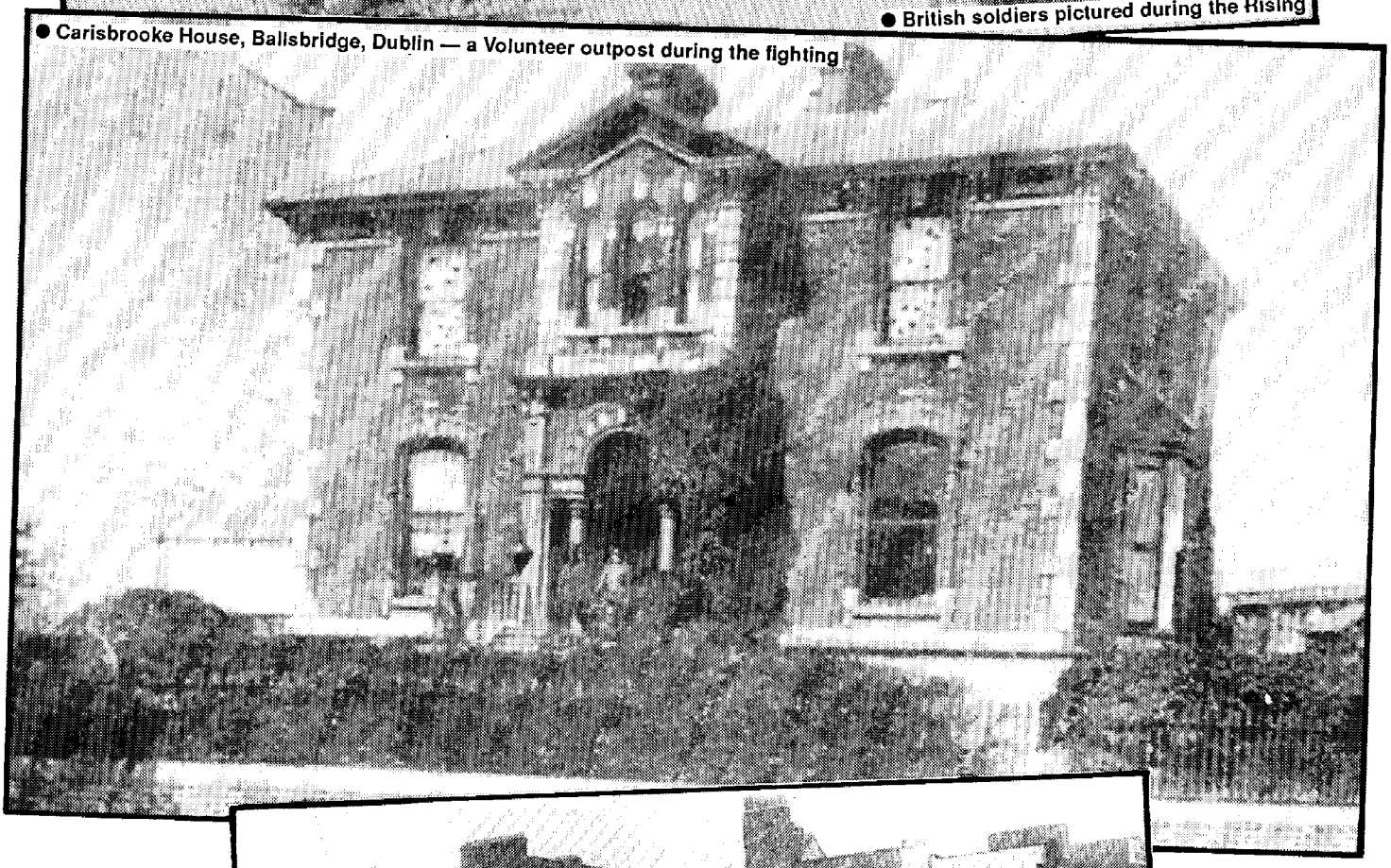


● **Jack Doyle and Tom McGrath. This photo was taken in the GPO on Easter Tuesday by Joe Cripps**



● British soldiers pictured during the Rising

● Carisbrooke House, Ballsbridge, Dublin — a Volunteer outpost during the fighting





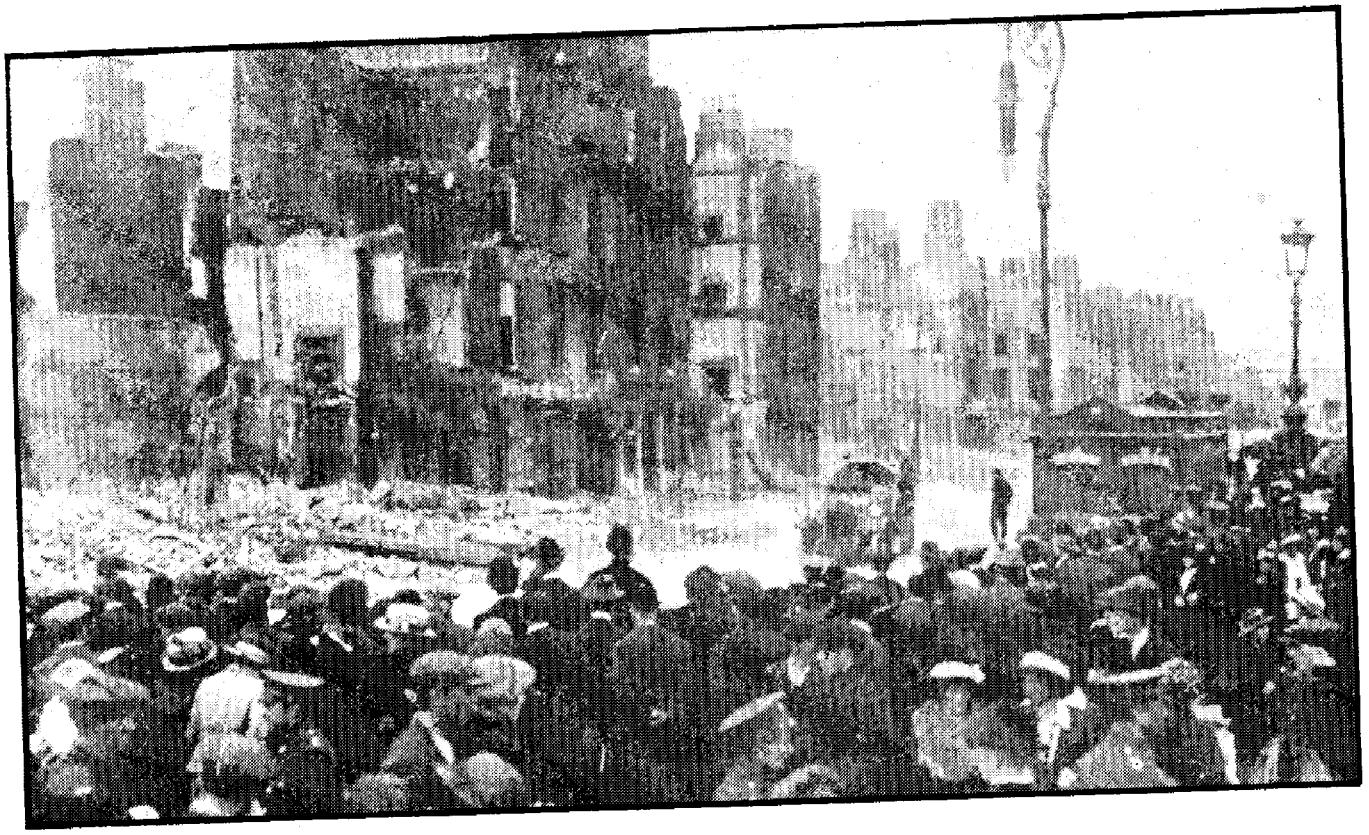
● North Earl Street, from Lower Sackville Street



● **Ruins in Sackville Street** (now O'Connell Street)



● **The British suffered their heaviest casualties of the Rising at Clanwilliam House. Four of the survivors from the Clanwilliam House battle are included in this photograph: Thomas and James Walsh** (on the left and right of the back row), **Willie Ronan** (front left) **and James Doyle** (front right). **Seamus Grace** (centre middle row) **fought with Lieutenant Malone in Northumberland Road and Joe Clarke** (on the right of Grace) **owner of the Irish Book Bureau, also fought at Northumberland Road**

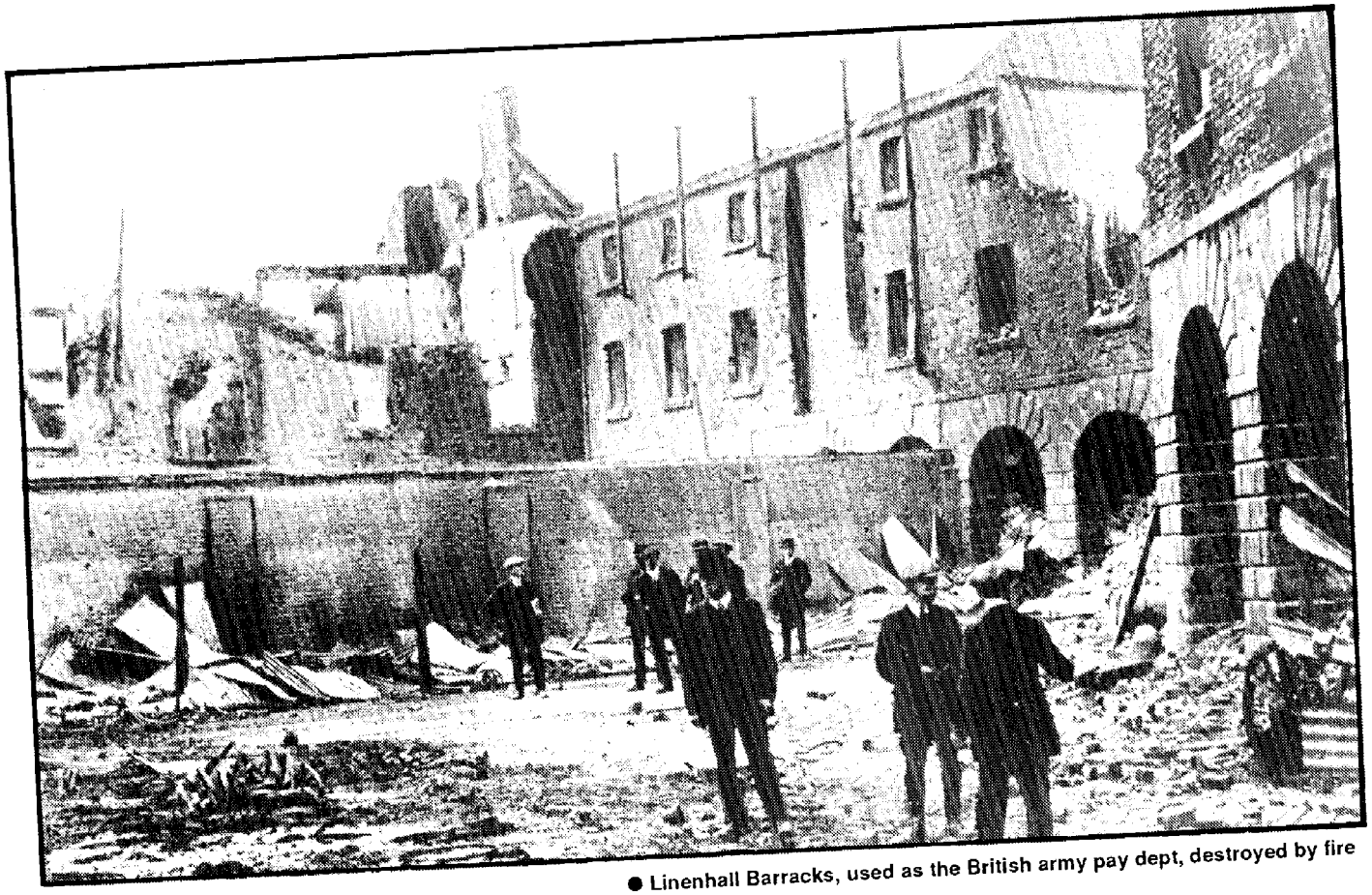


● (above) **Damage to the city centre of Dublin was extensive** (below) **Lower Abbey Street, showing the Royal Hibernian Academy — next to the GPO, the greatest historic loss of the fires**



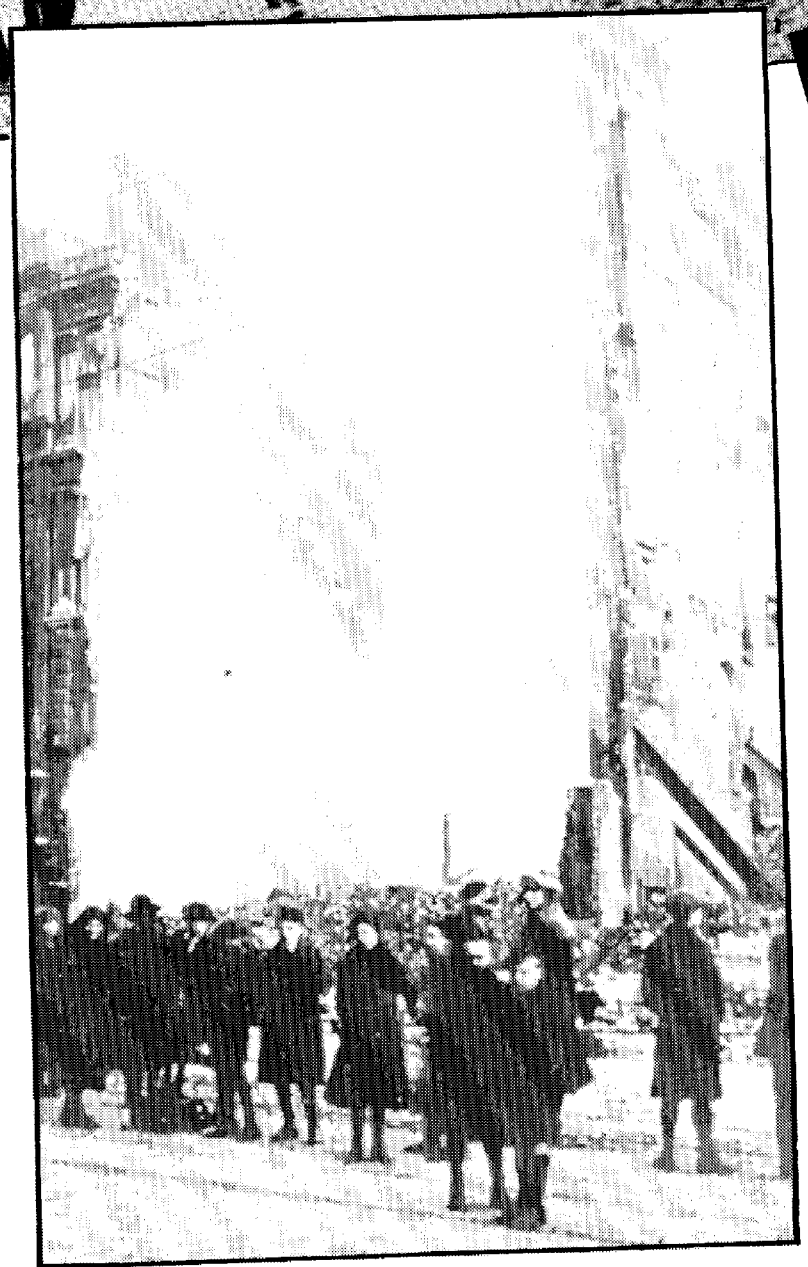


● Clearing up after the fighting.



● Linenhall Barracks, used as the British army pay dept, destroyed by fire



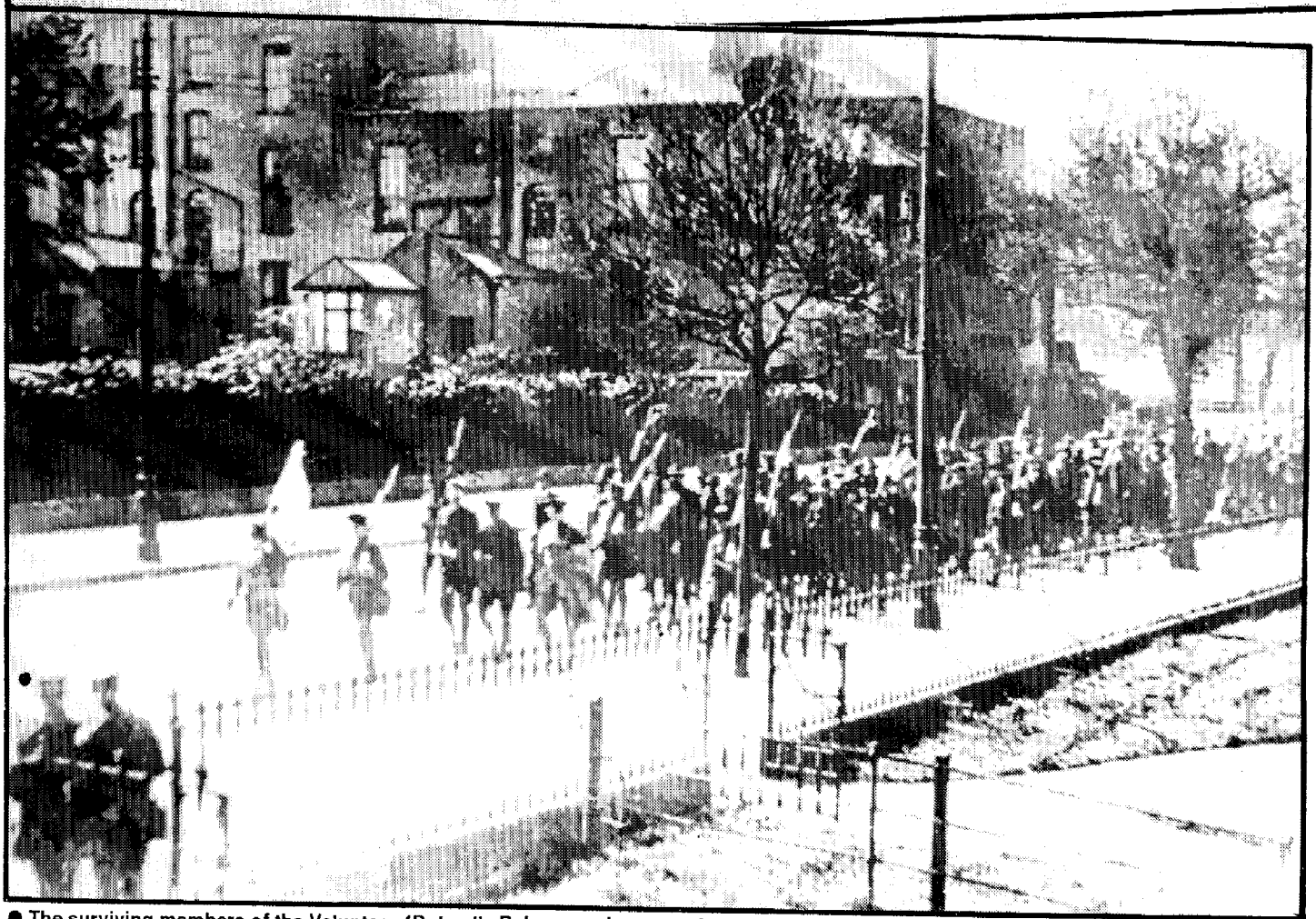




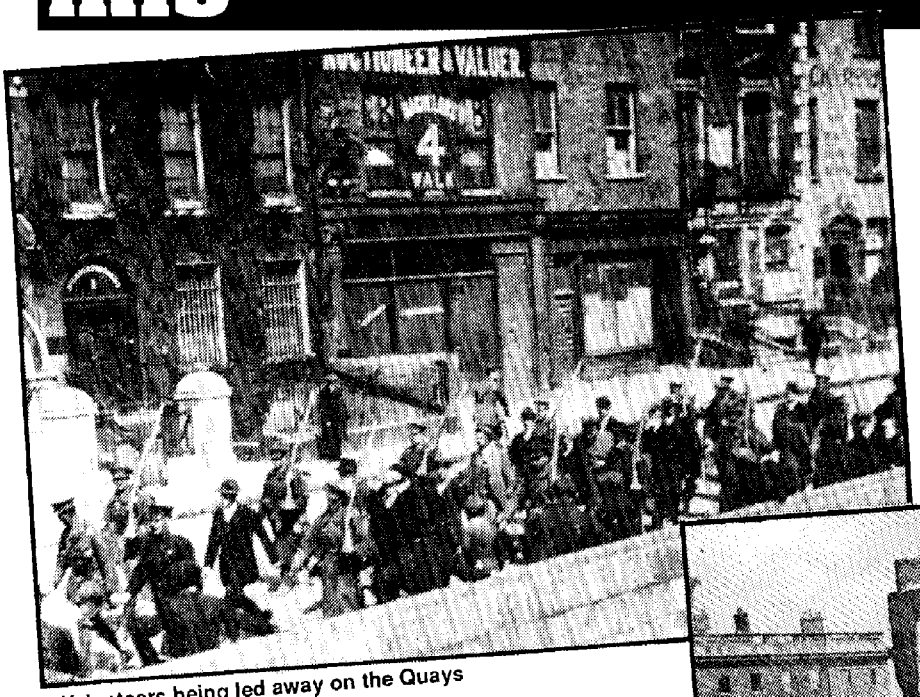
AFTERMATH OF THE RISING. *Above left.* Volunteers being marched away by British soldiers to the prisons after the order to surrender. *Above right and below left.* Passersby and soldiers look at the ruins of central Dublin. *Below right.* The shell of the Coliseum Theatre.



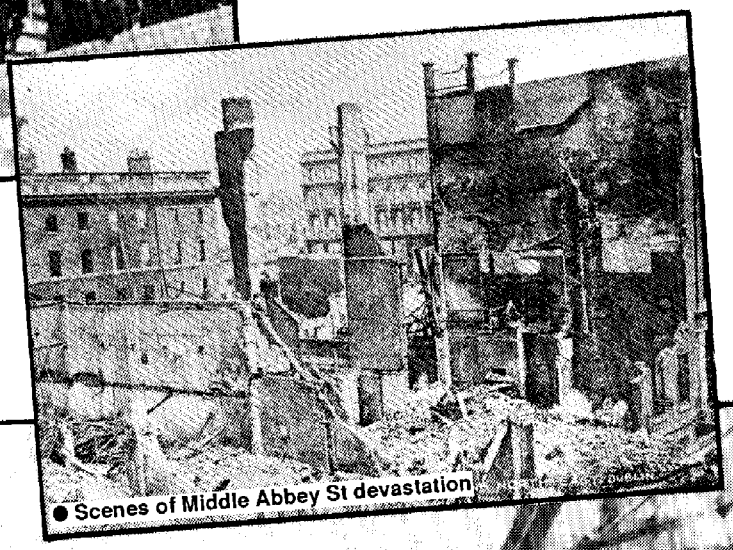




● The surviving members of the Volunteers' Boland's Bakery garrison march under British escort to surrender



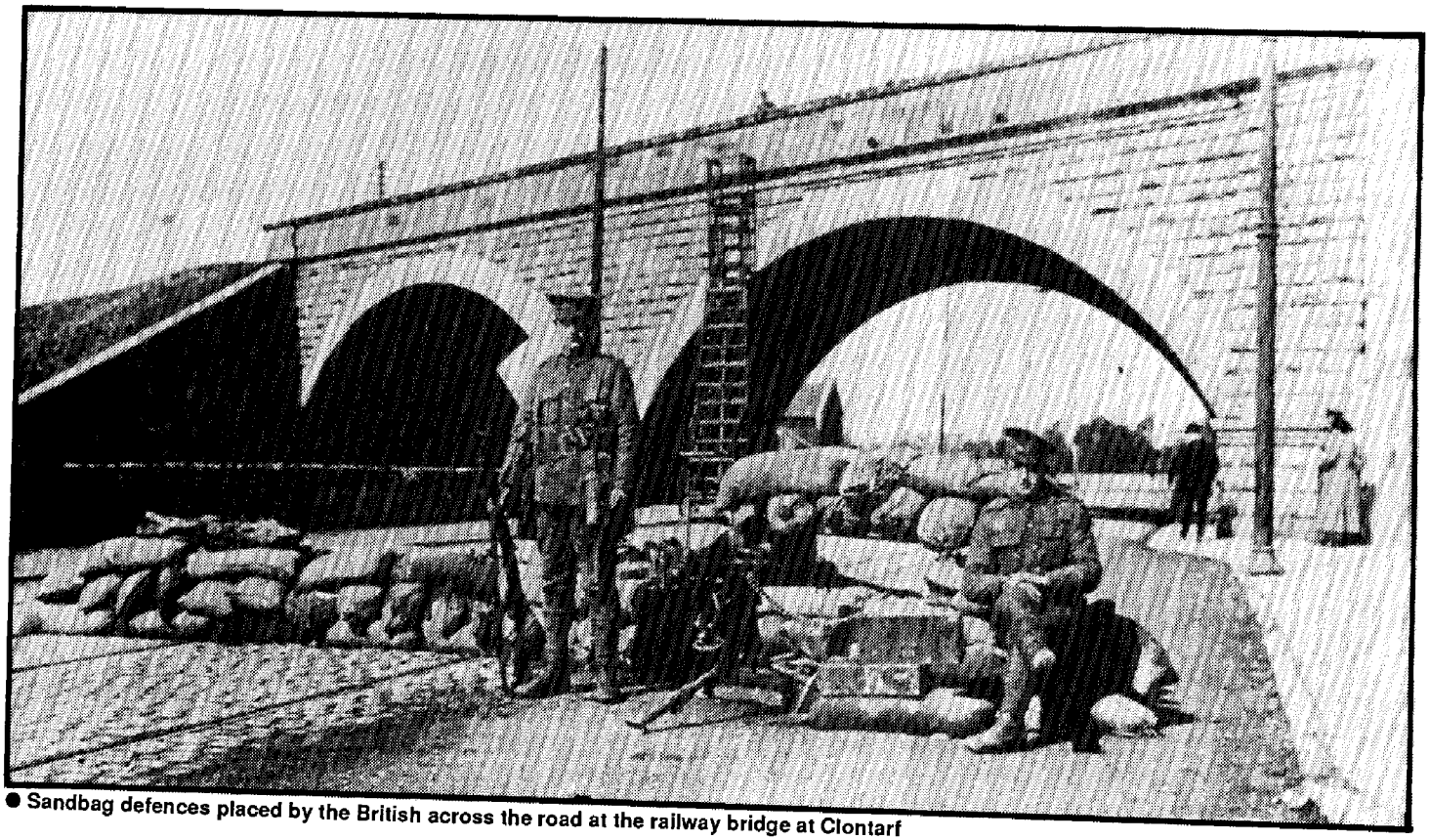
● Volunteers being led away on the Quays



● Scenes of Middle Abbey St devastation



● British soldiers sealing off the wasteland that was once the busiest streets of Dublin



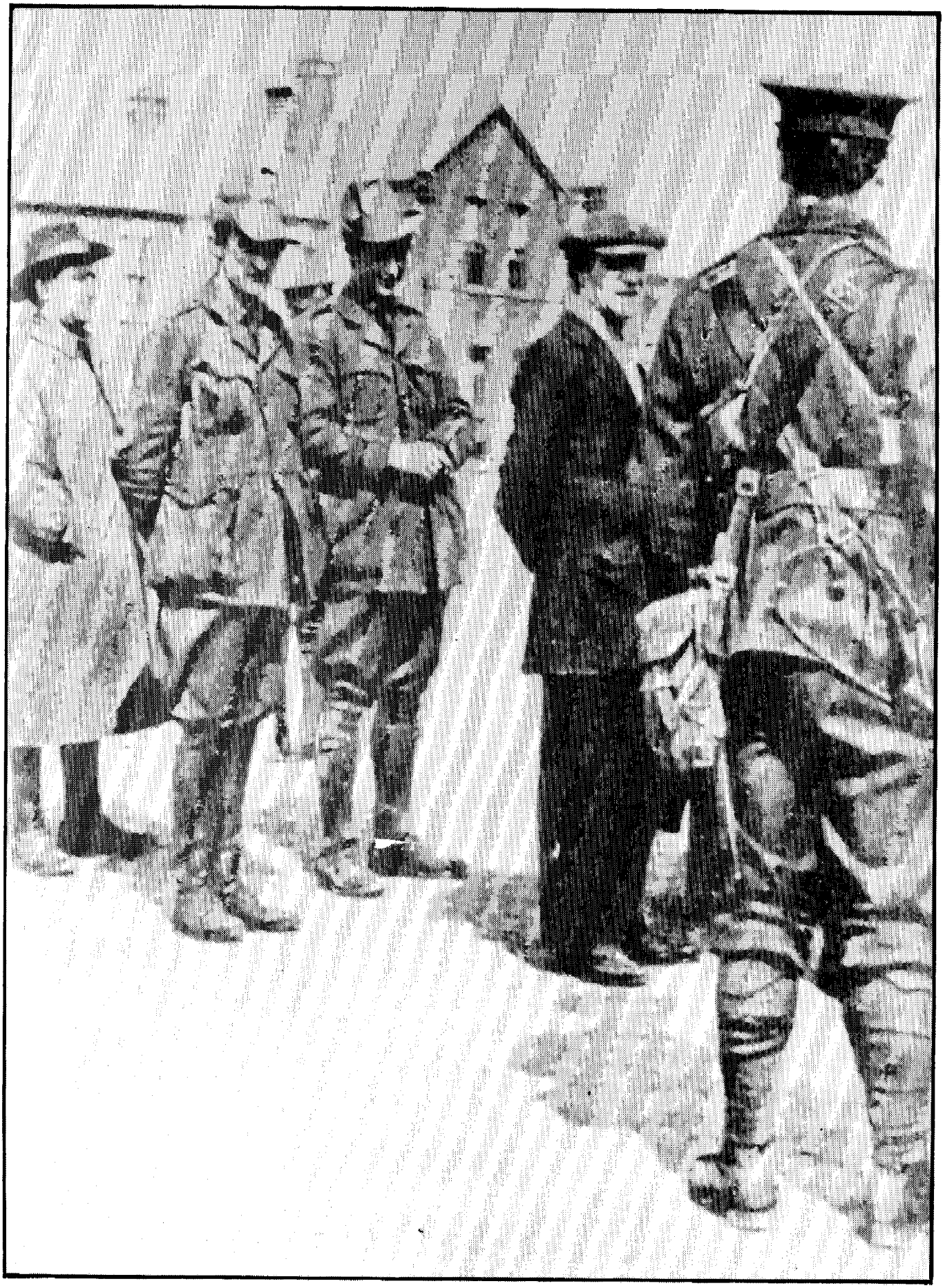
● Sandbag defences placed by the British across the road at the railway bridge at Clontarf



● Liberty Hall pictured after the Rising



● Pádraig Pearse (1879-1916) with his brother Willie, in a rare photograph taken when the elder Pearse was only 16



● Joseph, George and John Plunkett on the left of the picture. Joseph was executed and George and John had their death sentences commuted to ten years in jail.



● Major Seán MacBride in Volunteer uniform, on his way back to prison having been sentenced to death



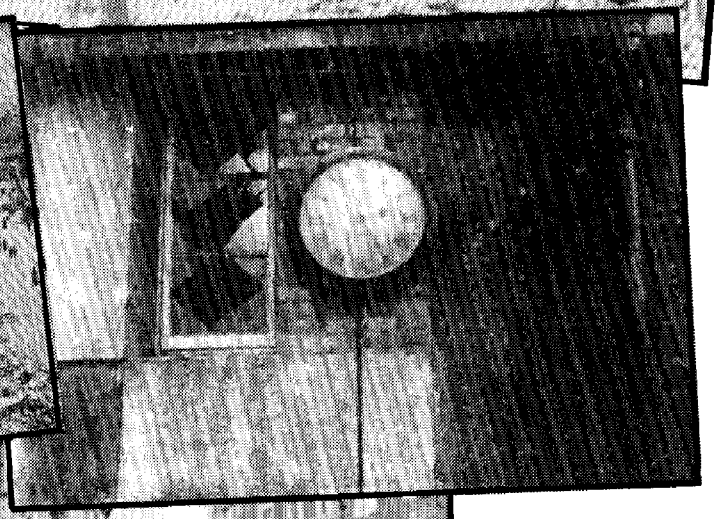
From Commander of Dublin Forces
To P. H. Pearce

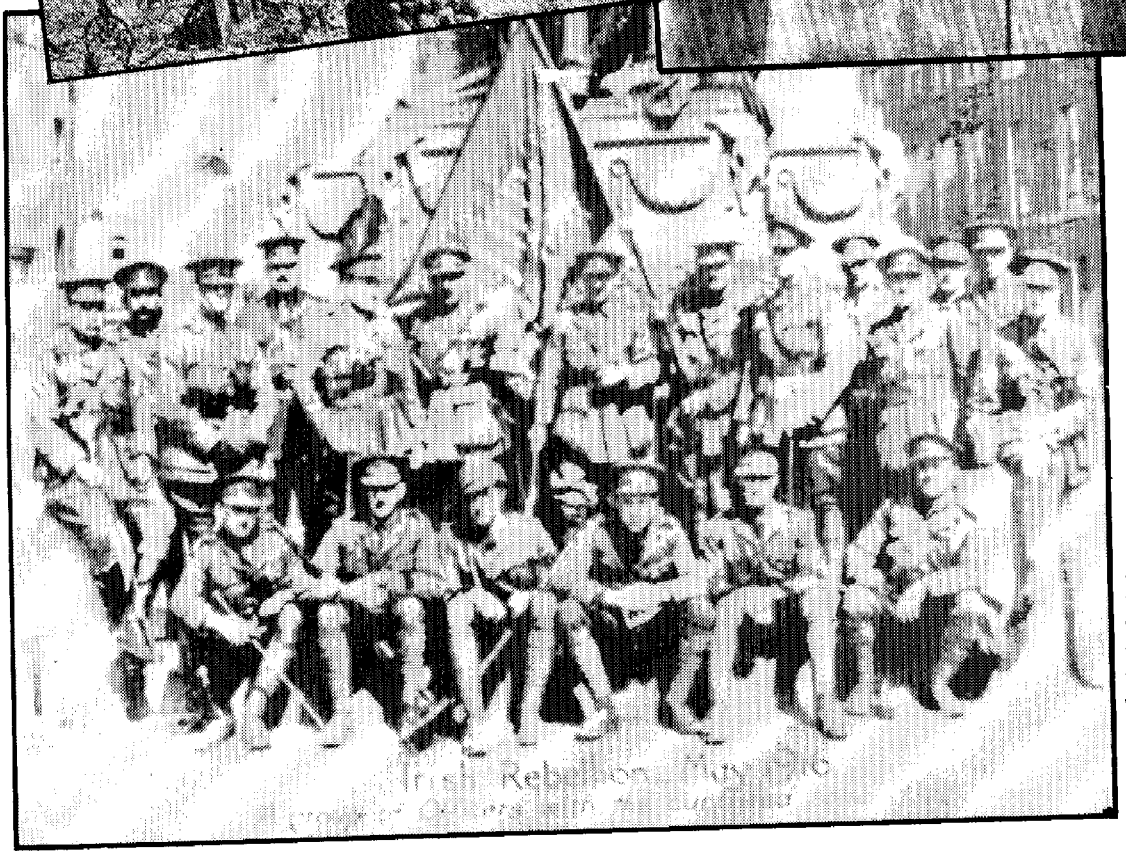
29. April/16
1.40 P.M.

A woman has come in and tells me you wish to negotiate with me. I am prepared to receive you in BRITAIN ST at the North end of MOORE ST provided that you surrender unconditionally. MOORE ST You will proceed up accompanied only by the woman who brings you this note under a white flag.

W. H. Lowe
B. Gen.







● (top left) **Brigadier-General Lowe's reply to Pearse**

● (top right) **The main hall of the GPO after the fighting ended**

● (middle left) **View northwards from Middle Abbey St**

● **The clock of the GPO shows the time at which it stopped**

● (bottom) **British officers pictured with the captured green flag which had flown over the GPO with the tricolour bearing the words Irish Republic**



● Pádraig Pearse surrenders to British Brigadier-General Lowe

In order to prevent the further slaughter of Dublin citizens, and in the hope of saving the lives of our followers now surrounded and hopelessly outnumbered, the members of the Provisional Government present at Head-Quarters have agreed to an unconditional surrender, and the Commandants of the various districts in the City and Country will order their commands to lay down arms.

P. H. Pearse
29th April 1916
3.45 P. M.

I agree to these conditions for the men only under my own Command in the Moore Street District and for the men in the Stephen's Green Command.

James Connolly
April 29/16

On consultation with Commandant Ceannt and other officers I have decided to agree to an unconditional surrender also

Thos MacDonagh.

● The surrender document, signed by Pearse, Connolly and MacDonagh.



IRISH IBERIAN



ANGLO-TEUTONIC



NEGRO

PERCEPTIONS

BY CLIODNA CUSSEN

***"WE British are sometimes told we do not understand the Irish, but, if this is so, the failure to understand is a two-way street. Everything on which the IRA is currently engaged suggests that it does not understand us at all,"* so wrote Peter Brooke, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, last July in the London *Evening Standard*. More august persons such as CJ Haughey and Garret FitzGerald have also said the same from their varying points of view.**

Since the Irish and the English see the world from completely different planes of being, it is of interest to examine how, after all this conflict, one side views the other.

"Fundamentally they do not very much respect us, we carry in our bearing, in our eager efforts to please, too much of the humility of the one time native. It is there in our sudden gushes of talk, in our sideways glances, in our constant lack of urbanity", as Elizabeth Bowen said we are *"florid, vain, quick to guilt and sentimentality."* We disregard things important in their civilisation; like pride in their army and navy. We lack periods of silence, goodbreeding and restraint. We speak a rapid almost foreign type of English, like Indians — *"a brogue"* they call it.

Unlike the Scots and the Welsh we have constantly wanted to stay out of their hegemony. We have nearly always been regarded as a *"damned nuisance"*. We exasperate them by our sense of history. In no other place has the population been in such constant rebellion against their impartial benevolent rule, and we will not let them forget it. Duplicity, fear, and evasion are all at work in our mutual relations. The glissades of unsettled historical conflict and of unspeakable present happenings cause undercurrents at the most staid and informal of our encounters. They find us unpredictable. We find them stiff. We can offend them by our most commonplace utterances on, say, World War II or the Malvinas War. They offend us likewise, since they do not understand or practise our unspoken, unacknowledged but very real concept of 'face'. We do not totally annihilate our political opponents, therefore we cannot adequately comprehend or defend ourselves against the totalitarian callousness of their 'real politik' since it breaks our unwritten codes of behaviour.

To them our small, quickmoving, falsely jolly politicians with their undeviating lack of steadfast resolve, have more in common with Italian businessmen or Levantine street-sellers than with the grave dignified men of affairs they perceive themselves to be.

We do not have their assured possession of superb self-confidence. We never approached their conviction of moral superiority. We are socially a little unsure of ourselves. We get on well with them at an effective rather than at an intellectual level.

We fall too easily into the old master-servant pattern of behaviour which is the historic English-Irish mode of relations. *"This injurious feeling of inferiority"* is also that with which the Northern Protestant deals with England ...*"His going to the capital (London) to find the central focus of his values, solves nothing. It only proves that his problem is not chiefly one of provincialism, but must be rooted in some species of colonialism or post-colonialism"* (JW Foster, *The Irish Review*, autumn 1988). According to Joe Lee, Professor of History, UCC, the qualities in the Irish acceptuated by colonial-

ism were, *"ambiguity, evasiveness, furtiveness and mendacity"*.

All species of fawning behaviour just adds to the thwarted sense of irritation that bedevils our relationships with England. Why, thinks the average English politician, should a problem so fundamentally unimportant take up so much of our time? As Garret FitzGerald said (*Irish Times*, 7/6/'89) *"We have always in Ireland failed to understand the extent to which the British governmental system has weaknesses and inefficiencies. We tend, because of a traditional inferiority complex, to think they're being clever when they're being stupid. The failure of the Irish to understand how stupidly the British can act is one of the major sources of misunderstanding between our countries."*

Commentators in the better-class English newspapers use a half-humourous, patronising tone when writing about Ireland, that manages to make the reader feel that these are an inferior but interesting people. The same tone was always used until recently in articles about Russians. It signifies that those written about are in some way outside the Pale. This tone of almost affectionate disparagement is beautifully illustrated in an article in the *Independent*, 18/3/'89 by Glebern Davis when he writes that *"panic was ever a traditional and economic element in Irish conflict"*.

The English concepts of 'doing the honourable thing' and of 'duty to a colony' which were recently agonised over when making settlements about Hong Kong, have never had the moral force to stand up to economic reality. Good moral reasons are always found for their own actions.

Although British governments have a masterly grasp of the effective use of propaganda, they must sometimes wish we were not quite so gullible, so easily cowed, so trusting of the authoritative voice of English mentors. Questioning voices on the truth of the British government line always come from independent newspapers or television in Britain, not from programme-makers or media people in Ireland. The master-servant relationships taboos are alive and well in the Irish media.

One of the saddest facts of Irish history is the way, time and time again, the Irish intellegentia have allowed themselves to be pushed into a welcome acceptance of Britishness. This acceptance of colonised mental status is as true for the North as it is for the rest of Ireland. Discussion programmes on television emanating from Belfast, contain constant references to the 'mainland'. In the Republic



the present reappearance of the colonised mentality is more insidious but none the less real. A continuing symptom of it is the refusal of the intellegentia to promote or maintain the Irish language. Trivial items pointing to this are the 'Windsor Heights' type names on housing estates, the recent adoption of pseudo-English accents by RTE announcers and newsreaders; and Radio Eireann's constant use of British correspondents in countries, like the Philippines, where many Irish are resident. The cosy feeling of being an integral part of Hewitt's *British Archipelago of Islands* gives constant comfort to a section of Irish people.

It is almost as if they believe that a healthy sense of Irish national identity was in some way reprehensible. As if being pro-Irish made people in some sense anti-English. As if Irish nationality was to be defined only in relation to the British Islands, not in relation to the Irish Islands. This internalised defining of ourselves only in relation to one of our neighbours, gives us a feeling that only our relations with England are real and important.

The English never define themselves in relation to the Irish. In fact their whole attitude in relation to Ireland, one of exhausted irritation and sporadic hatred mixed with fear, has been around since the 16th century. Constant influxes of Irish into England since the 1800s have caused strains on English society, but their ability to assimilate them only points to the strength of their culture.

The English never define their relation with Ireland, nor have they, since Gladstone, had a clear definite policy in regard to Ireland. Their actions are political reactions as Garret FitzGerald said (*Irish Times*, 7/6/'89) *"Their system is uncoordinated because there's no system.*



● 19th century stereotypes but the master-servant relationship taboos are alive and well in the Irish media

Northern Ireland secretary people think there's a Northern Ireland policy — but there isn't. No British government has succeeded — except in a very brief period of negotiation, or an immediate reaction to something like the fall of Stormont — in concentrating its attention sufficiently to ensure the actions of all ministers are directed towards the same objective.

"The result is that things are done, the cumulative effect of which can be negative, not because of ill-will but because of a lack of appreciation of the consequences of the action being taken. To Irish governments the whole issue is so important that we cannot afford to act negatively regardless of consequences." In fact, *"Ireland is very rarely on the Cabinet agenda"* as Merlyn Rees said in 1989, *"to us it is not very important"*.

For us, our constant lack of belief in our own importance is the main reason for our ability to take racist insults and diplomatic evasions lying down. The Irish take no offence at successive waves of anti-Irish hysteria in the British media because they believe they themselves are not important. They also believe they are powerless to change anything.

The country that the Irish intellegentia, media and politicians find themselves inhabiting no longer seems worth defending; for we no longer believe in ourselves, or in our own integrity or importance; and if you no longer believe in yourself you do not take offence.

The weary cynicism so prevalent in the 'Republic' today is part of this malaise. That England has exhibited a special tenacity and savagery in the North of Ireland for the past 20 years is no longer permitted to trouble us. We know that to challenge the British presence would mean a struggle, even if only a political one, and among Irish politicians — even those who were most vociferous 20 years ago — it no longer seems politically desirable to speak from a strong Irish position. This bourgeois consensus extends right through the middle classes.

The recent economic situation and the return of emigration have brought back our traditional humility, our lack of assurance, our chameleon-like ease of adopting commonwealth-type identity abroad. Why else do the Irish diplomats speak with English-style accents and neither know nor use Irish?

The bourgeois consensus of 'whatever you say, say nothing' is not new. It was lampooned by James Joyce at the beginning of this century — he called them *"the gratefully oppressed"* in *Dubliners* and it has regrown in force here since the early '80s. It means that awkward questions are not asked. It means that the received wisdom is that Ireland must not be seen to stand up in any way to the British government, *"haranguing each other across the Irish Sea"*. Instead we have the Anglo-Irish Agreement, that effectively neutralises any complaint by the simple expedient of bureaucratising it, thus rendering any public Irish government stance or action in defence of Irish citizens outside the state unnecessary, unfortunate and positively ill-mannered.

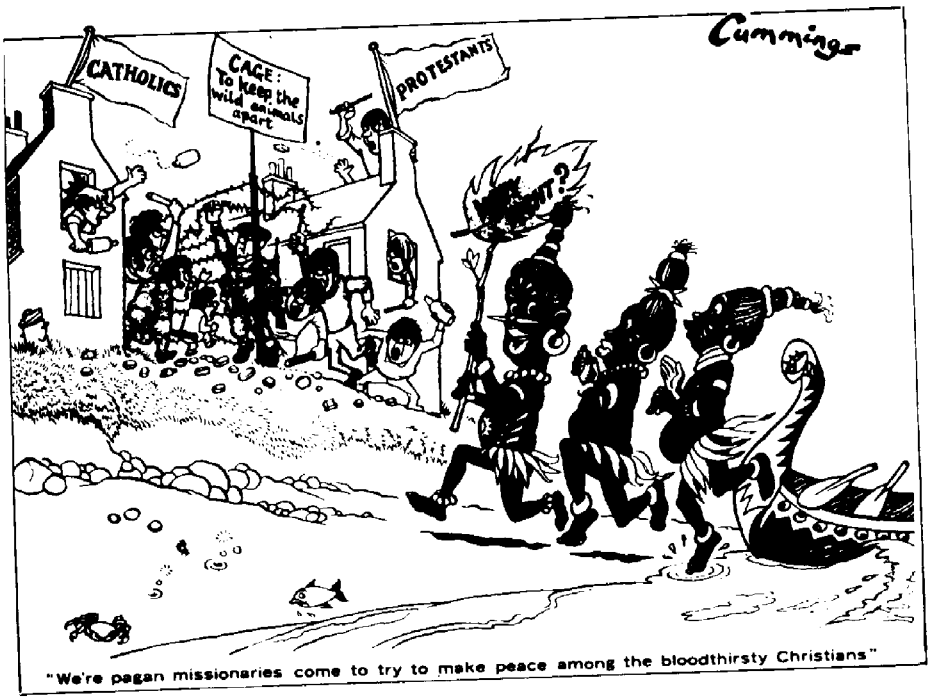


● **Mrs Thatcher's punitive legislation aimed specifically at Ireland has also seen an erosion of British civil liberties**

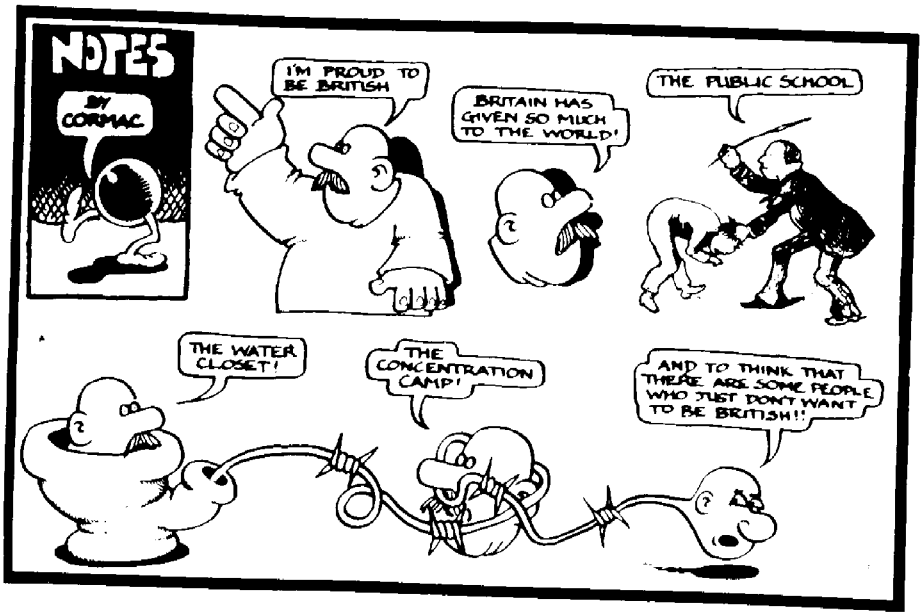
The continued lack of an Irish Press Office to present the Irish position to the world, means that events in Ireland — the plight of Irish citizens, scandals like the Stalker-Sampson report etc — are never related to the world from an Irish viewpoint. The Irish viewpoint is thus ignored and in some way we are now ashamed of it. The escalated, incessant harassment of Irish citizens by the British troops gets little or no coverage in the Southern media. The media is paranoically anxious not to be seen to be siding with Sinn Féin, just as their counterparts were in 1914-1922. It is as if Irish perception of Irish-related events signifies nothing, as if the Irish reality eludes us; as if in some way we do not want to take full responsibility for our own being, but instead are still hiding behind the 'poor little nation' cushion. We lack nerve, we lack audacity, we lack national pride, I do not speak of jingoism but of a solid strengthening *mórtas cine*. This the English have never lost. Who in Ireland talks of Irish values as being something we have historically found out to be good for us? We sadly lack what the English call 'backbone'.

Irish politicians, like a lot of others in England, Scotland and Wales, were anti-Mrs Thatcher's policies, but no one in Ireland discusses Tom Nairn's scenario of the possible break-up of the British hegemony; the possible secession of Scotland and the effect this might have here. At the first Constitutional Convention held in Edinburgh which brought together groups in Scotland to present a demand for a Scottish parliament, Canon Kenyon Wright, General Secretary of the Scottish Council of Churches, told the politicians present *"there is a Greek-biblical word for it — kairos — a time. It is not just the passing of days, but of time that is ripe — there is a new political climate — we are at kairos; a time for Scotland"*. Canon Wright brought together a number of strands of opposition sentiment: the sense of moral outrage over politics seen to be both philistine and grasping; and the belief that Scotland has preserved not just a separate national identity but also a distinct politico-moral sense which is now reasserting itself.

Mrs Thatcher was bad for Ireland, not just in the soothing paralysis of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, but because current



● *Alternate perceptions of the British role in Ireland*



punitive legislation aimed specifically at Ireland has also seen an erosion of British civil liberties. The Charter 88 group in Britain, who see that the English have lost their civil liberties because of what their government is doing in Ireland, is presently agitating for a Bill of Rights to reinstate the Rights of the Individual in Britain and to reform the system of human rights and civil liberties. Writing in the *Sunday Times*, Dorothy Wetherburn made the following points *"Mrs Thatcher was bad for the Scots; not just those living in Scotland, but the descendants of the Scots who settled in Ulster 300 and more years ago. They too, have remained stubbornly nationalistic. Conservatism has been the best guarantee of the link the Unionists wished to preserve. Now, with the Anglo-Irish Agreement, faith in that guarantee has been dealt a mortal stroke. It has shown* that *the British establishment has wholly given up on Ulster's cause: that there is no political reason for retaining the link (there has not been a strategic or economic reason for some time) as Tom King made brutally clear,"* and as Peter Brooke reiterated in his speech last November — England has no longer any strategic or economic reason for remaining in Ireland.

If there had been a *"greater quality of esteem"* (Hewitt) between the Irish and English government, then things might have been different.

A passage from Paul Scott's opus magnus on India *A Division of the Spoils* where the name Ireland has been substituted by me for the name India, may help to illustrate how fair-minded English people look at the Irish question today. *"For hundreds of years Ireland has formed part of England's idea about herself and for the same period Ireland has been forced into a position of being a reflection of that idea. Up to say 1900, the part Ireland played in our idea about ourselves was the part played by anything we possessed which we believed it was right to possess (like a special relationship with God). Since 1900, certainly since 1918, the reverse has obtained. The part played since then by Ireland in the English idea of Englishness has been that of something we feel it does us no credit to have. Our idea about ourselves will now not accommodate any idea about Ireland except the idea of returning it to the Irish in order to prove that we are English and have demonstrably English ideas. Getting rid of Ireland will cause us at home no qualm of conscience because it will be like getting rid of what is no longer reflected in our mirror of ourselves. The sad thing is that, whereas in the English mirror there is no Irish reflection, in the Irish mirror the English reflection may be very hard to get rid of, because, in the Irish mind, English possession has not been an idea but a reality; often a harsh one. The other sad thing is that people like the Irish may now see nothing at all when looking in their mirror. Not even themselves? But we shall see. The machinery for demission is wound up and there are overriding economic arguments for setting it in motion. And the fact that they're still there simply adds to an English sense of grievance."*

Should we not now be looking for new thinking, like Scotland; and, instead of the sterile patterns of post-colonial rhetoric, or the axphyxiating soothsaying of Lenihan-type waffle, should we not be asking for *"Out by 92"*?

1916 — What did it mean for Irish women?

BY URSULA BARRY

WHAT is there for women in Ireland to commemorate in 1916? Did the 1916 Proclamation and the subsequent Democratic Programme of the First Dáil contain radical or revolutionary statements on the position of women in Irish society that were later betrayed or sold out in the process of establishing the Free State?

Certainly it is true that the 1916 Proclamation called for a radical democratic republic based on principles of equality and justice with a national government *"representative of the whole people of Ireland, and elected by the suffrages of all her men and women":*

"The republic guarantees religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens, and declares its resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and of all its parts, cherishing all the children of the nation equally, and oblivious of the differences carefully fostered by an alien government, which have divided a minority from the majority in the past."

Hannah Sheehy-Skeffington, a major feminist activist, was to be one of five



● HANNA SHEEHY-SKEFFINGTON

members of the Provisional Government to be set up once the rebellion was victorious. Three years later, the Democratic Programme of the First Dáil (where Constance Markievicz followed Alexandra Kollontai in the Soviet Union as the second female national public representative) asserted its commitment to *"the principles of liberty, equality and justice for all"* and declared that *"the duty of the nation (is) to assure that every citizen shall have opportunity to spend his or her strength and faculties in the service of the people"* and *"the right of every citizen to an adequate share of the produce of the nation's labour".*

Very little of this kind of radical democratic republicanism was to survive amongst those who shaped the Free State over the following decades. Within 20 years of the establishment of the Free State, a legislative framework had been put in place reflecting conservative and reactionary thinking with particularly serious implications for women. Women, who had played a key role in both republican and workers' organisations, as well as asserting their own demands for the vote, were systematically excluded from public life and constrained to the private domestic sphere in both the Free State and the North. But more than that. Social life was viciously suppressed in the Free State, where literature, film, sexual expression and even dancing were the target of repressive laws.

DENIAL OF RIGHTS

The 1920s saw the denial of the right to civil divorce, the virtual exclusion of women from jury service and the savage censorship of films and other publications. During the 1930s the focus shifted inevitably towards sex as contraceptives were outlawed, in a piece of legislation that simultaneously penalised brothel-keepers, and the Public Dance Halls Act of 1935 gave district justices the power to regulate and control public dances (a move directly in line with a Catholic Church pastoral on the *Evils of Modern Dancing* a few years earlier). That same year the Conditions of Employment Bill 1935 imposed a maximum proportion of women workers in industry and gave the Minister for Labour the right to prohibit them completely. So much for equal opportunities!

The more radical republican ideology which emphasises diversity and co-existence based on a concept of common humanity was completely marginalised during this period in which the State took on increasingly the role of a single moral authority. And the nature of that moral authority was such that the rights, needs and creativity of women were buried under a rigid system based on the deliberate preservation of the economic and political system for men and the fear of sexuality — especially female sexuality.

The 1937 Constitution, perhaps more than any other document, reflects the contradiction between the revolutionary period of 1880-1920 and the reactionary thinking of the 1920-'50 period. As the constitution of the 26 Counties it echoes some of the elements of the 1916 Proclamation and the Democratic Programme of the First Dáil. But it also, and in some ways even more so, reflects the time in



● The 1937 Constitution asserted that women have only one role in Irish society — that of mother and homemaker

which it was produced. While the equality of all citizens before the law is enshrined within it, it also makes reference to different capacities of citizens based on sex. In addition it asserts directly and unambiguously that women have only one role in Irish society — that of mother and homemaker — reinforced by a prohibition on divorce legislation.

REPRESSION

Interestingly, those aspects of the Constitution, which have their roots in the more radical definitions of the Republic, are precisely those which have been used in a number of constitutional cases to assert democratic rights. For example, the right to import contraceptives for personal use, women's right of access to jury service and to co-determine the education of their children were all established under the Constitution. But there is little doubt that the defeat of radical republicanism and the subsequent partitioning of the island, stripped the new state of its radical democratic potential. Partition has given us two weak and fragile states which have secured their existence through political and social repression.

A formidable alliance of right-wing forces, both inside and outside the institutional churches, has resisted progressive democratic change in both parts of this island. In the North the selective application of British social legislation (for example abortion and homosexuality) finds its direct parallel in the socially repressive 26-County state where: married women were banned from public and private service employment; restricted in industrial employment; where abortion and male homosexual practice still carry a possible life sentence; where contraception was only finally and partially legalised in 1980; where the state designs its marital breakdown legislation according to Catholic Church dictates; where 'ethical' committees in the health and education systems succeed in determining the content of sex education, the availability of sterilisation and the limits on infertility research.

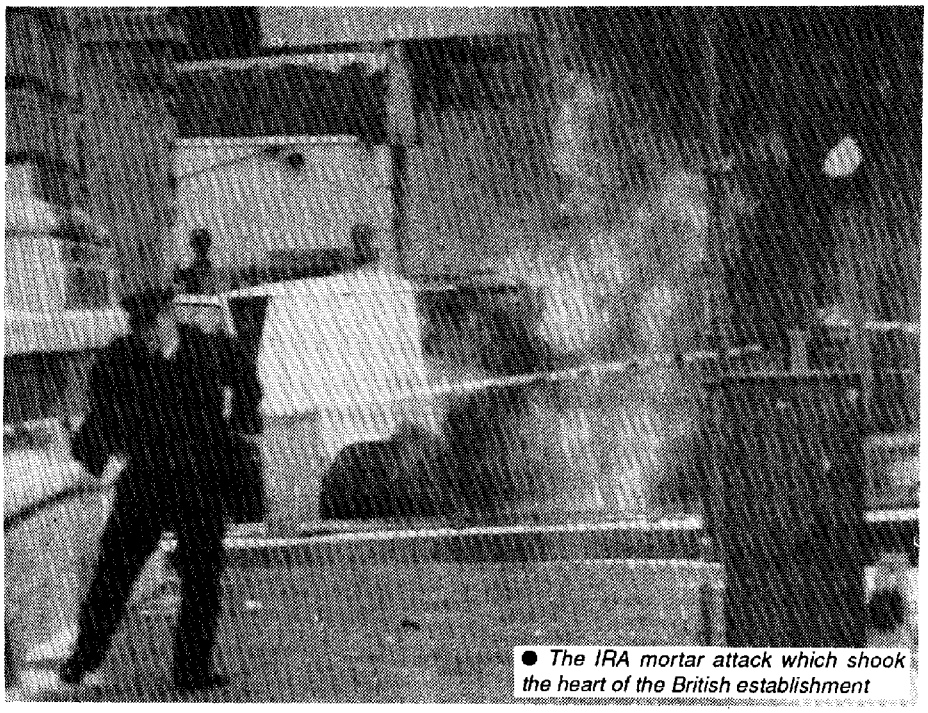
So what does it mean for women to commemorate 1916? I think that for women the question is not so much the Rising or the content of the Proclamation but rather to reflect on a period of critical revolutionary thought and action on this island. A time when socialism, feminism and republicanism were on the agenda, were subject to debate, when ideas were explored and revolution was in the air, when women were organised and militant and powerful enough to ensure that those early documents which attempted to characterise the incipient republic asserted a radical image of a society in which the equality of women and the rights of workers and small farmers would be a founding principle. Key individuals, like Constance Markievicz, James Connolly and Hannah Sheehy-Skeffington, were central to this process but the debate around the kind of social and economic system which was to be built in an independent Ireland was weak and thin on the ground. It is hardly surprising, in that context, that it was so marginalised and that feminist and workers' organisations were subjugated in the early decades of the Free State.

HANGING ONTO POWER

It should also be said that the conservative and essentially anti-woman ideology that shaped the contours of the Free State and the 26-County state have always been part of Irish nationalism. Radical popular republicanism and right-wing reactionary thinking have existed side by side inside the Republican Movement throughout its history. The significance of the period at the turn of this century, was that radical republicanism was at its most powerful and both socialist and feminist thinking was influential. But the Tan War, the Civil War and the resulting partition of this island marked its defeat. No period of radical economic and social change occurred in either state. Unrelenting emigration and underdevelopment have characterised the economy of this island. The energies of those in power were devoted exclusively to holding onto that power. Both states fear an exploration of their origins — history is almost subversive. Demands for social and economic change in the South and political reform in the North have been viewed as threatening the very existence of those states.

Whatever concessions have been achieved since the establishment of the Free State which have improved the position of women have been the result of the overwhelming demands by women for greater control over their lives. While partition generated two states resistant and antagonistic to the needs of women, republicanism, in all its aspects, has rarely built on its radical strand reflected in the 1916 Proclamation. Perhaps looking back at the early decades of this century shows us more than anything, that equality and liberation for women in this and every society demands and requires its independent voices and organisations. Only from a position of power, have women both influenced and played a central part in the radical republican tradition.





● The IRA mortar attack which shook the heart of the British establishment

SUSTAINED GUERRILLA CAMPAIGN

IN THE LAST eight months the ingenuity and resourcefulness of Volunteers of Oglaigh na hEireann has been demonstrated very clearly in the different types of military operations carried out against a variety of targets. Britain's war machine in Ireland and in England, those who maintain it, and Britain's policy of normalisation have all been targeted in the sustained guerrilla campaign by the IRA.

By far the most spectaular event, not taking away from the daring and risk taken by Volunteers involved in the hundreds of other operations in this period, was the one which very forcefully reminded those who are prosecuting Britain's war in Ireland that they face the consequences of their war.

At the height of the oil war in the Gulf, during Britain's 'War Cabinet' meeting the IRA demonstrated its ability, as it had on other occasions in this period, to strike at the very heart of Britain's war machine

In an audacious operation IRA Volunteers drove a van with three mortars on board into the heart of the British establishment and came within yards of wiping out the cabinet when the mortars fired. The IRA, in a statement issued within hours of the operation, said: ***"Today an active service unit of the IRA successfully breached the greatly enhanced wartime security surrounding 10 Downing Street by launching a mortar attack in the heart of the British establishment.***

"The operation had been planned over a number of months. Its inception pre-dates both John Major's coming to power and the beginning of British involvement in the Gulf War.



WAR NEWS

"Whether the Gulf War goes on for weeks or years, let the British government understand that, while nationalist people in the Six Counties are forced to live under British rule, then the British Cabinet will be forced to meet in bunkers.

"The British government has the solution to the conflict of which today's attack is a part. It should initiate the process which will lead to British withdrawal from our country and create the conditions for a true democracy throughout Ireland."

This period saw the continued development and refinement of the IRA's weaponry, tactics and targets. The helicopter lifeline which sustains the British presence along the border was continually shown to be extremely vulnerable following a number of attacks which brought down British army helicopters. The dependancy of troops along the border on the helicopters for their very existence was clearly exposed proving a vulnerable link in their border operations.

Contractors supplying and maintaining Britain's war machine were targeted, along with the houses and vehicles of crown forces members. Barracks, helicopters, Land-Rovers,checkpoints, commercial targets, the law courts, informers, all were under gun and/or bomb attack thus stretching the resources and the morale of the crown forces to breaking point. Continuously the British administration were reminded that the only thing that is going to get them anywhere is that they must decide when enough is enough and call an end to the conflict, thus ending the agony which their presence generates for all concerned.

Regrettably three operations ended in tragic circumstances when civilians were killed. The period also saw the deaths on action service of Volunteers Martin McCaughey and Dessie Grew and in tragic circumstances of Volunteers Seán Bateson and Patrick Sheehy.

Below we list the main attacks, some successful, others not so. Hundreds of other bombs were defused by British army technicians, abandoned after being disarmed by Volunteers and other planned gun and bomb attacks had to be cancelled or postponed due to the proximity of civilians. The IRA has asked the

A REVIEW OF IRA OPERATIONS DURING THE PERIOD JULY 1990 — FEBRUARY 1991

1990

July

2nd: Five RUC men, three British soldiers and two civil servants were treated in hospital for a variety of blast injuries when Volunteers of the IRA fired an RPG warhead devastating a room in which they were working at one of the RUC's most recently constructed bases at Grosvenor Road in Belfast.

8th: An RUC man was very seriously injured when he and a colleague came under gun and bomb attack inside Dungannon town's security zone. The injured RUC man was one of two crown forces personnel parked outside a shop when an IRA Volunteer opened fire. The Volunteer then lobbed a grenade at the vehicle, but it failed to detonate.

11th: Belfast IRA ambushed a joint British army/RUC mobile patrol which was travelling along Roden Street in the west of the city.

20th: In England, IRA Volunteers have continued to stretch both the nerves and resources of the British political and military establishment with a bomb attack on the London Stock Exchange, right in the heart of the British capital. The blast ripped through the building at Threadneedle Street.

21st: Belfast Brigade Volunteers carried out a bomb attack which crippled a British armoured vehicle and injured two soldiers in the New Lodge Road area. An impact grenade scored a direct hit on a British Land-Rover.

24th: Three RUC men and a civilian were killed in an IRA landmine explosion on the Killylea Road on the outskirts of Armagh. As the target of the attack, an RUC vehicle, reached the hidden landmine Volunteers of the North Armagh Brigade detonated the bomb, catching the RUC vehicle but also tragically a car carrying two innocent women.

26th: Derry Brigade executed Patrick Flood, who had been a British agent for three years, passing on information on IRA Volunteers, operations and dumps, and sabotaging IRA bombs. Flood had joined the IRA in 1985, but after arrest in May 1987 agreed to work for the crown forces. After a long investigation Flood was apprehended by the IRA. In a detailed statement, the IRA gave full details of his involvement with his crown forces handlers. *"We would again urge anyone working for the British to reflect on what has happened and to immediately come forward. Irrespective of the length of time or the depth of involvement it is never too late. Anyone who does so has absolutely nothing to fear from the IRA."*

30th: In a major blow to the British establishment Ian Gow, a leading Tory and for years a central figure in the formulation of Thatcher's Irish policy, was killed as he attempted to drive his booby-trapped car from his home in the Eastbourne village of Hankham near Pevensey. Claiming responsibility for Ian Gow's execution, the IRA said that: *"Until the British government, which legislates for and sustains the occupation of the Six Counties, abandons its futile military campaign, ends partition and recognises the Irish peoples' right to self-determination and democracy, the IRA will continue to strike, whenever and wherever the opportunity arises."*

31st: Tyrone Brigade carried out a grenade attack on the main UDR base in Cookstown.

August

4th: In a statement issued through the Republican Publicity Bureau, Dublin, and signed P O'Neill, the IRA have said that they have offered a limited amnesty to people involved in passing information to the crown forces. "We have decided to declare an amnesty for one week commencing midnight on Sunday, August 5th, to Saturday, August 11th, at midnight. We urge all those involved in passing any information to the crown forces to come forward during these seven days before it is too late. Remember, history shows that you will inevitably be caught, with most regrettable but necessary consequences. *"We guarantee and publicly state that anyone coming forward to us between these dates will not be harmed in any way. This opportunity may never arise again."*

Belfast Brigade Volunteers carried out a grenade attack against a crown forces mobile patrol at the junction of the Newtownards Road and Short Strand.

13th: Volunteers of Belfast Brigade carried out a gun attack on British soldiers patrolling the new security exclusion zone around Belfast High Court

16th: Volunteers of Tyrone Brigade opened fire on crown forces in the village of Pomeroy.

18th: West Tyrone Brigade, IRA, planted a booby-trap device killing David Bogle, a contractor for the crown forces.

23rd: Tyrone Brigade Volunteers carried out a gun attack on contractors carrying out repair work at Pomeroy Barracks.

September

5th: Tyrone Brigade devastated Loughgall RUC Barracks when one of their engineering units drove a substantial device right up to the barracks wall. Damage to the barracks, scene of the SAS ambush which claimed the lives of eight Volunteers and one civilian in May 1987, was extensive.

South Derry Brigade carried out the ambush at Lowertown Road in County Derry, in which two employees of Henry Brothers, Magherafelt, were seriously injured. Henry Brothers are the biggest crown forces contractors in the Six Counties and have persistently ignored IRA warnings to those who collaborate with the occupation forces to desist from such contracts.

6th: The IRA's Belfast Brigade caused major embarrassment to British security chiefs following a blast on board a £130 million Ministry of Defence ship docked in the heart of the Harland and Wolff Shipyard in East Belfast. The blast followed IRA warnings to the media that a number of 6lb devices had been placed in position on board the British Royal Navy vessel, Fort Victoria. One exploded, ripping through the ship's main engine room.

15th: In an operation which demonstrated the impotence of the British forces in South Armagh, in spite of the massive British military presence in the area, the IRA succeeded in establishing a roadblock, inside the Killeen exclusion zone and in full view of two spy-posts, and detaining an RUC detective. The RUC man, Louis Robinson, was involved in the interrogation of many nationalists at Castlereagh torture centre in Belfast and was a prime prosecution witness at the show-trial of paid-perjurer, Chris Black. He was executed next morning.

Five RUC men sustained slight injuries when a grenade was lobbed at an RUC jeep in Gardenmore Road, Twinbrook.

Two 50lb mortars were fired and landed inside the heavily fortified Carrickmore Barracks. Unfortunately they failed to explode.

17th: An IRA active service unit shot and critically wounded a British army sergeant as he emerged from a recruiting office in Finchley, Thatcher's constituency. The soldier was shot at teatime by a lone Volunteer who fired up to six shots at his target before withdrawing from the scene on a motorbike. Claiming responsibility for the attack, the IRA said that its Volunteers had also carried out the attacks at the home of General Anthony Farrar-Hockley, former Commander of Land Forces in Ireland, and at the home of Lord Robert Armstrong. They also said that IRA Volunteers placed the bomb that demolished a recruitment office in Derby and narrowly

missed injuring soldiers who were just arriving to open up the office on September 10th.
17th Heavy-calibre machine-gun fire was directed at Springfield Road Barracks in Belfast.
18th: *"The Irish people, particularly those in the British occupied area, pay a heavy price for British involvement in their affairs. Those responsible for this involvement, or for the murderous policies which flow from it, must learn that so long as the British government persists in its illegal and illogical claim to Ireland, they too will pay a heavy price."* These words from the IRA followed the gun attack on Air Field Marshall, Peter Terry, who sustained serious gunshot wounds at his luxury Staffordshire home. Terry, recently the British governor and military commander of Gibraltar, was the man who gave clearance for the SAS killing of three unarmed IRA Volunteers on the Rock in March 1988.
19th: The Derry Brigade detonated an anti-personnel mine at the junction of the Lonemoor, Foyle and Letterkenny roads as a mobile British army patrol was passing. A number of the soldiers in one of the vehicles were injured in the explosion.

A senior RUC detective was ambushed at Scraghy Road on the outskirts of Castlederg. Seven Volunteers set up an ambush position near a Quarry on the Scraghy Road. When their target arrived they opened fire, seriously wounding him.

20th: An ASU from the Derry Brigade, armed with high-powered rifles, fired up to 100 shots at the British army Masonic base in Upper Bishop Street in the city centre.
22nd: A British army patrol in the Silverbridge area of South Armagh came under concentrated fire from Volunteers of the IRA injuring at least one soldier.
23rd: A British soldier, currently serving with the UDR but with past service in the Junior Infantry Battalion and the Royal Irish Rangers, was executed by Volunteers of the North Armagh Brigade, at the Oxford Island area on the shores of Lough Neagh.

Volunteers fired a sustained burst at soldiers changing the guard at the post of Girdwood British army base.
25th: Volunteers mounted an assault against the main sangar post which guards the newly-erected security exclusion zone around the Belfast Law Courts precincts. Afterwards they said *"Far from limiting our scope of operations, the costly and highly disruptive imposition of a fortified security zone around Chichester Street has simply added to the targets which must be guarded by crown forces personnel. We will continue to direct our operations here and elsewhere to stretching the crown forces and sapping their morale."*
26th: A British soldier sustained gunshot wounds when he and other soldiers standing in position on the helicopter pad at Newtownhamilton Barracks came under fire from an active service unit of the South Armagh Brigade of the IRA.

A lone Volunteer armed with a semi-automatic assault rifle fired a total of 20 shots at the main observation post of the Henry Taggart Barracks.
27th: In the heart of London, just hours before the British "war cabinet" met to discuss the latest wave of IRA military operations in England, an active service unit placed a 4lb Semtex device which, but for a chance discovery, could have inflicted a major blow to the British establishment. The bomb was in the hall where a conference on 'terrorism' was due to be addressed by British Foreign Office Minister William Waldergrave. The bomb on the main speaker's lectern at the Royal Overseas League buildings, in Picadilly, was discovered just before the commencement of the conference organised by the Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism.
27th: Sustained gunfire by Volunteers armed with heavy-calibre weapons, was poured into the spy-post at Drumackavall near Crossmaglen.
29th: Tyrone Brigade Volunteers opened fire on a UVF commander who had been *"spotted carrying out reconnaissance at Kildress in the days leading up to the loyalist gun attack on the Casey and O'Driscoll families"*. The man survived the attack. The IRA said that they knew *"the identities of other members of this loyalist gang and repeat our position that we will take appropriate action against those involved in carrying out or assisting attacks against the nationalist community."*

October

1st: An RUC man was injured in the County Fermanagh village of Maguiresbridge when a booby-trap bomb devastated the cab of a lorry which he was driving.
5th: Belfast Brigade launched a series of operations against commercial targets in the city centre and against military bases in the west of the city, causing millions of pounds worth of damage. Simultaneous gun attacks were carried out against crown forces positions at New Barnsley, Springfield Road, North Howard Street and Broadway.

Tyrone Brigade said that their Volunteers detonated a 30lb landmine on the Washingbay Road as a 25-man RUC patrol entered the blast area. None of the crown forces personnel were seriously injured.
13th: An IRA active service unit secured an area around the security gates at High Street, Belfast, on the edge of the city-centre exclusion zone and when a blue Sherpa van carrying two RUC men approached the gates two Volunteers approached the van and fired two shots each, wounding both RUC men in the head and neck. One of those wounded died several days later.
15th: IRA Volunteers again breached city centre security to plant a series of incendiary bombs at commercial premises in the Cornmarket area. A total of four premises were targeted with extensive damage being caused.
16th: An RUC man was executed as he emerged from a hotel on Belfast's Antrim Road.
23rd: A member of the UFF loyalist murder-gang was shot dead by IRA Volunteers in Belfast. The man, Billy Aiken, a taxi-driver, had just delivered a fare to the Royal hospital on Belfast's Falls Road when two Volunteers fired a number of shots from point-blank range, killing him instantly.

Belfast Brigade Volunteers carried out a gun attack on Oldpark Barracks in which an RUC man was injured.
24th: British political and military chiefs were left reeling after an early morning co-ordinated bomb attack which devastated two of the most heavily-fortified permanent British border posts at Coshquin in Derry and Cloughoe in Newry, leaving six



● **The Coshquin border post which was devastated in an IRA bomb attack on October 24th**

British soldiers dead and over 17 soldiers injured, five of them seriously. Two RUC men also sustained injuries in the Newry blast.

The massive bomb explosions occurred within seconds of each other and almost 100 miles apart in the heart of the two border posts. IRA Volunteers commandeered two houses owned by individuals involved in collaboration with the crown forces. The men then ferried the explosives to the targets. A third bomb attack on a crown forces position took place at the main British army base on Gortin Road, Omagh, County Tyrone. The driver used on this operation was directly involved in collaboration and worked in Omagh Barracks. The device only partially exploded. There were no injuries.

The heaviest loss of life was suffered at Coshquin checkpoint on the main Derry to Buncrana Road where five soldiers lost their lives and five others sustained serious injury and the man ferrying the bomb, a kitchen assistant in Fort George British army base in Derry, also died. The checkpoint was totally destroyed. In a follow-up statement the IRA said: *"Following our military operations in which we forced individuals under contract to the British forces to drive bombs to their targets, we wish to strongly reiterate our warning to all those engaged in contract, construction or service work for the British crown forces. Those engaged in such work should desist or be prepared to suffer the consequences".*

27th: Volunteers from South Fermanagh Brigade fired concentrated heavy machine-gun fire at a two helicopter patrol near Corragunt on the Fermanagh/Monaghan border. One of the craft was struck by fire but both managed to withdraw from the area.

November

10th: The most senior RUC Special Branch man executed by the IRA to date was killed at Castor Bay on the Southern shores of Lough Neagh. The detective inspector, attached to the Special Branch at Cookstown, who had served in the RUC since 1962, was on a duck hunting trip along with three companions, one a full-time RUC reservist,when an IRA ASU targeted him.

The Belfast Brigade, IRA, shot 17-year-old Martin Slane from the Beechmount area of West Belfast, in the leg. Slane was shot and given 48 hours to leave the country for passing information to the crown forces and would have been executed, the IRA said, had it not been for the fact of his youth and very low intelligence. They said: *"We are aware of several other sources of information to the crown forces and make a public appeal to those under pressure from the crown forces to come forward without fear, should they fail to do so they will suffer the consequences."*

A single mortar device trained on Toomebridge Barracks exploded in flight before entering the base.

South Derry Brigade Volunteers armed with assault rifles engaged RUC personnel who were establishing a roadblock at the Woodend Road near Kilrea.

12th: Two IRA engineering units, backed up by an armed ASU, positioned two massive mines on the Tassagh Road in South Armagh. Volunteers monitoring the area detonated the mine in a roadside ditch as an armoured RUC car drew level with the target area. The vehicle sustained serious damage but both its occupants miraculously escaped with only minor injuries. During the follow-up search operation a second massive explosion shook the area. The pressure plate device was triggered by a cow just under 100 yards away from the advance British army search team.

15th: The IRA said a total of 40 shots were fired at a Henry Brothers convoy under RUC escort on its way to a crown forces installation.

20th: A Belfast Brigade active service unit fired a number of shots at crown forces personnel on duty at a fortified pillbox attached to the defences erected around Belfast High Court following a series of IRA operations aimed at the Law Courts.

21st: One British soldier, part of an eight-strong patrol, suffered minor injuries when only the detonator of a 100lb bomb went off during a clearance operation at Cappagh in County Tyrone.

23rd: Fourteen British soldiers escaped death by the narrowest of margins when only the detonator of one of the biggest IRA bombs used, 3,700lbs, went off beside their accommodation quarters at the permanent border checkpoint at Annaghmartin near Roslea in County Fermanagh. The massive device was driven to the checkpoint by a crown forces collaborator who had been forced into going to the checkpoint where he made regular deliveries.

25th: North Antrim Brigade placed the bomb which exploded beside Randalstown RUC base.

30th: Two RUC men were injured in a daring IRA gun and rocket attack on a fortified sangar at High Court Judge Ian Higgins's home off Belfast's Antrim Road. A single rocket warhead scored a direct hit on the sangar, badly damaging it and injuring both its occupants. The second Volunteer then fired a burst of shots at the position to provide cover for their withdrawl from the area.

December

1st: South Fermanagh Brigade, IRA, mounted a sustained attack against a British army patrol emerging from one of the recently curfewed British border posts. A British patrol leaving the secured area at Killyvilly checkpoint near Roslea were fired on with heavy machine-guns

South Derry Brigade IRA claimed responsibility for the execution of a collaborator and the mistaken killing of another man in the Maghera/Kilrea area of South Derry

6th: Belfast Brigade targeted an RUC social function being held at the Dunadry Inn in Templepatrick by placing three bombs at the premises, timing them to detonate while the function was in progress. The devices failed to detonate. The IRA criticised the RUC for failing to act on warnings issued by them after the devices failed to explode.

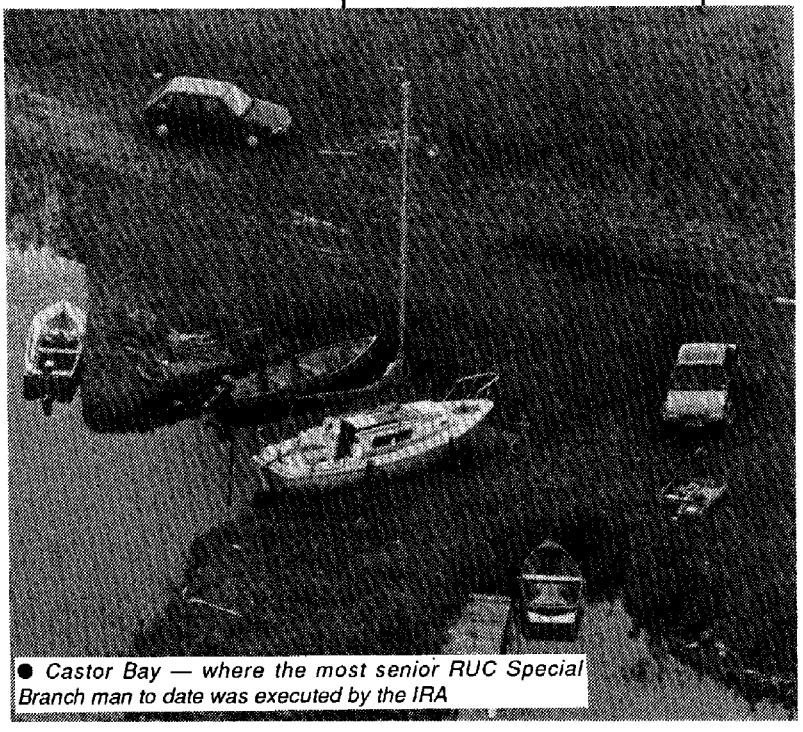
7th: Belfast Brigade ambushed a British army mobile patrol as it made its way along the Monagh by-pass in the west of the city. Two ambulances were sent for by the British patrol but we have no confirmation of any injuries.

8th: Two RUC men sustained blast injuries in an attack on a patrol which was in the process of leaving Mountpottinger Barracks in East Belfast when a single device was lobbed at the patrol.

10th: A sustained burst of semi-automatic fire was directed at a British army patrol returning to Henry Taggart Barracks on the edge of the Ballymurphy estate in West Belfast.

18th: The IRA in Belfast accused the RUC of *"deliberate and wilful"* endangering of civilians, following the RUC's failure to act on warnings delivered to independent agencies about the presence of bombs in the prestigious Castle Court complex in Belfast city centre.

The IRA statement came hours after one bomb exploded and another was defused inside



● *Castor Bay — where the most senior RUC Special Branch man to date was executed by the IRA*

the multi-million pound complex.

20th: A full-time RUC reservist was executed as he drove home after he had left Lurgan RUC Station.

21st: Two British soldiers were injured in a bomb attack on a British army foot-patrol in the Hillhead Road area of Stewartstown, when Volunteers from the South Fermanagh Brigade detonated the bomb as a foot patrol passed by.

The IRA announced a three-day cessation of offensive military action effective from midnight December 23rd to midnight December 26th. Reserving the right to take defensive action the IRA said that active service units had beeen instucted to *"suspend all offensive action in the British occupied area for a period of three days... The suspension was simply a seasonal gesture of goodwill to activists, their families and the nationalist people, all of whom had endured so much throughout this long struggle... There is no talk or pressure from within the IRA for a ceasefire and no pressure from our comrades in Sinn Féin."*

26th: Less than 20 minutes after the end of the suspension of operations on midnight of December 26th, IRA Volunteers launched a gun attack on the permanent border checkpoint in Roslea in County Fermanagh. Positioned on the top of a nearby hilltop, Volunteers fired over 400 rounds from heavy machine-guns before withdrawing from the area.

27th: Two RUC men were injured in a bomb attack on Mountpottinger RUC Barracks in the Short Strand area of Belfast.

31st: Two incendiary bombs went off in the British Home Stores and a third in the Victoria Centre

1991

January

1st: Mid-Ulster Brigade said their Volunteers using a 12.7mm anti-aircraft gun carried out a gun attack on the permanent vehicle checkpoint in Aughnacloy shortly after 8pm on New Year's Day.

3rd: Two impact grenades were thrown at a British army mobile patrol at the junction of Colinbrook Crescent and the Pembrook Loop Road shortly after 8pm.

4th: Volunteers mounted a gun attack against collaborators working on the Law Courts.

A gun and grenade attack was mounted against Henry Taggart Base on the edge of the Ballymurphy estate in the West of the city. A crown forces mobile patrol engaged in a follow-up operation came under a double impact grenade attack at Whiterock Road.

5th: In simultaneous operations active service units of Belfast Brigade placed dozens of incendiary devices at commercial targets throughout Belfast, Lisburn, Glengormley, Dunmurray, Newtownabbey and Newtownards. Millions of pounds worth of damage was caused as the devices exploded.

A British army foot-patrol emerging from Springfield Road Barracks, in West Belfast, came under gun and grenade attack. Twenty shots were fired at the troops and two grenades were lobbed at them as they withdrew under covering fire into the base.

7th: South Armagh Brigade of the IRA has said that they had killed three British soldiers and injured several others in a carefully planned IRA operation at Tullyvallen, near Cullyhanna. Two engineering units, backed up by armed Volunteers, had moved into the Tullyvallen area and planted two devices, one a roadside mine controlled by command wire and the second, a land-mine equipped with a pressure-plate-activated detonator. Next day Volunteers detonated the device kiling two soldiers. The third fatality came eleven days later, when soldiers, engaged in a widespread sweep of the area detonated the second device which had been placed in a field off the main road. The British army denied any fatalities and seemed to be using the Gulf War to cover up deaths in the Irish war.

Forty shots were fired at British troops who were examining a hoax device outside Fort Jericho at Turf Lodge in West Belfast.

8th: The IRA again targeted the remains of the Coshquin border outpost when active service units, armed with automatic weapons, took up positions on three sides of the checkpoint site before firing upwards of 100 rounds at soldiers stationed in temporary positions.

11th: A single RUC armoured car carrying three members of the RUC's notorious DMSU cruising the Springfield area of West Belfast was attacked by a Volunteer who lobbed a grenade at the vehicle. The device exploded on impact with the armoured car and all three occupants sustained injuries which were described as minor.

15th: Two impact grenades were thrown at a single RUC armoured car turning into Water Street, Newry, One exploded injuring its occupants.

21st: South Fermanagh Brigade executed an RUC reservist in the Brookeborough area as he and an RUC colleague were going to work.

22nd: Volunteers preparing a mortar attack on Strabane Barracks had to take evasive action when British army and RUC personel came on the scene. In a ten-minute gun battle all three Volunteers succeeded in withdrawing from the area safely.

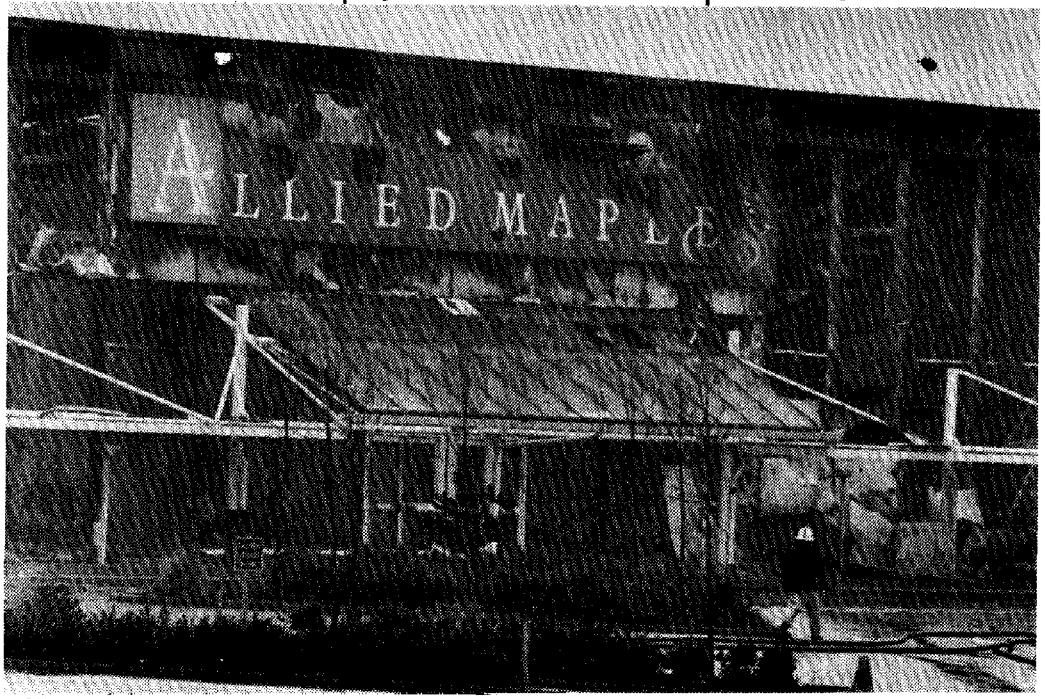
23rd: Collaborators involved in extensive repair work at the bomb-damaged Law Court Buildings within the Chichester Street security exclusion zone, came under gun attack.

27th: Incendiary devices caused serious damage to showrooms and factories in Belfast

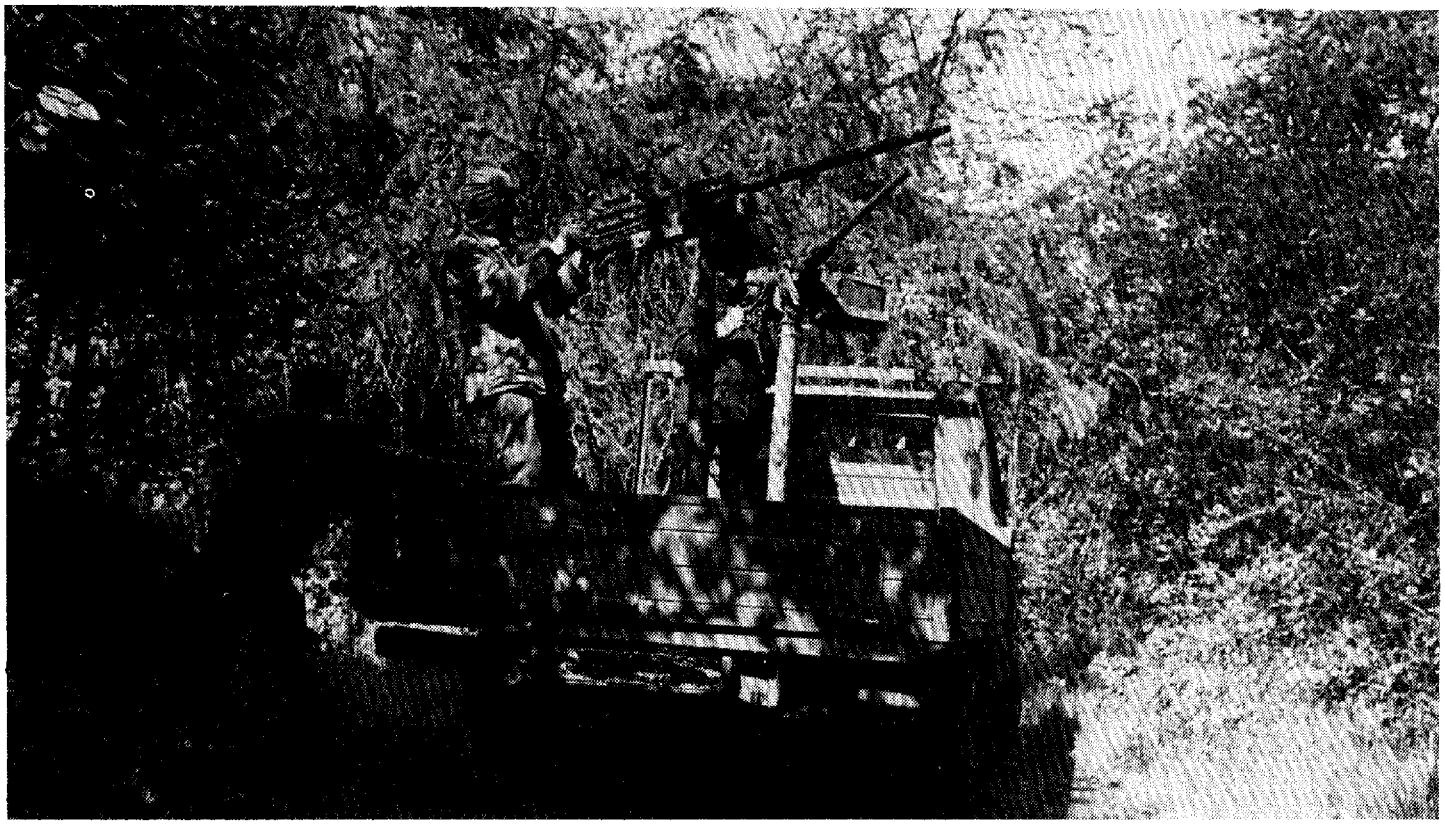
29th: One of the biggest dairy firms in the Six Counties, Fane Valley Co-op Ltd, has announced that it will no longer fulfil contracts with any branch of the crown forces. The announcement by the Markethill firm, which has an annual turnover of £18 million, came on Tuesday, January 29th, in the wake of an IRA statement claiming responsibility for planting a booby-trap device under the car of one of the company's senior executives.

30th: A grenade device was thrown into Mountpottinger Barracks in Belfast where it exploded, causing damage.

31st: Volunteers of South Armagh Brigade mounted a sustained attack, using heavy-calibre machine-guns, against a British army Wessex helicopter attempting to land at Forkhill



● **Millions of pounds of damage was caused in fire-bomb attacks by ASU's of the Belfast Brigade in a series of attacks on January 5th**



● Three British military helicopters were shot down by IRA Volunteers using heavy-calibre machine-guns during February

Barracks . The aircraft was struck by repeated gunfire and was forced into making an emergency landing.

A joint British army/RUC mobile patrol came under grenade attack in Stewart Street in the Markets

South Fermanagh Brigade said Volunteers planted the explosive device which damaged a set of commercial premises in the village of Roslea

February

3rd: Magherafelt UDR base in County Derry was blasted by a 500lb van-bomb after armed Volunteers arrived at the home of an employee of the crown forces biggest contractor in the Six Counties, Henry Brothers of Magherafelt. The collaborator was instructed to drive the bomb to the base. Soldiers stationed at the base acted on a five-minute warning thus averting any crown forces injuries; the base, however, sustained substantial damage.

Two grenades thrown by Volunteers of the Belfast Brigade exploded in Andersonstown RUC Barracks

7th: Henry Taggart Base in West Belfast was rocked by a grenade explosion.

9th: There were simultaneous attacks on North Queen Street Barracks, where Volunteers poured sustained machine-gun fire into the front of the base and at York Road Barracks, where a single nail-bomb was lobbed at the rear of the base.

11th: A crown forces mobile patrol which was moving along Mountpottinger Road, Belfast, came under grenade attack.

13th: Two active service units of the South Armagh Brigade moved 12.7mm anti-aircraft guns into separate positions covering a helicopter flight path into Crossmaglen Barracks. Two crafts, one a Lynx gunship, and the second a transporter with supplies netted below it, approached from the direction of Silverbridge. As they swoop-ed in towards Crossmaglen the ASUs opened fire on the transporter. The transporter jettisoned the provisions it was carrying and began to take evasive action. However, it took a number of direct hits and was seen to wobble in the air before plummeting into nearby fields. One of the ASUs, whose firing position covered the crash site of the stricken craft, continued to fire at the helicopter and its crew. As the Volunteers withdrew from the area, the Lynx, which had gone to ground, resurfaced, landed beside the stricken craft and airlifted its crew from the scene. The downed helicopter lay in the open for several hours before being airlifted out by a twin-rotor Chinook.

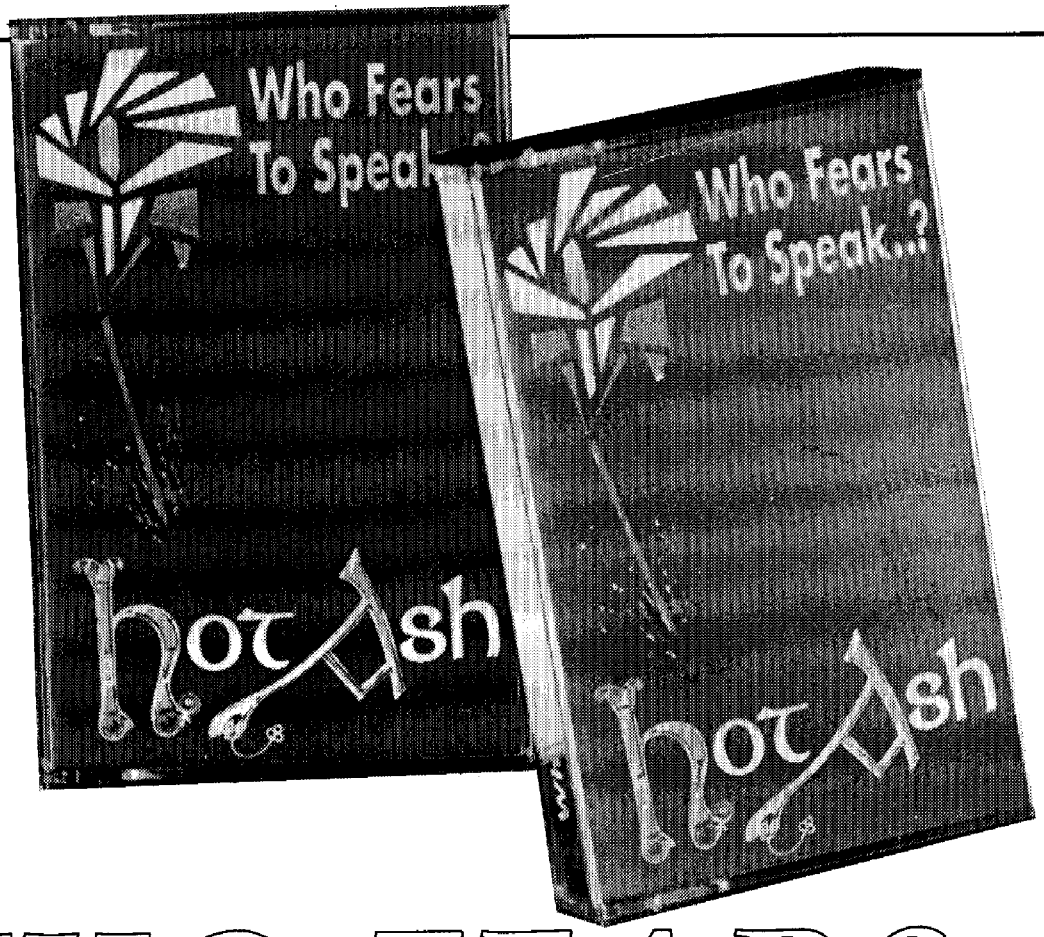
14th: A British soldier sustained blast injuries when he activated a letter-bomb delivered to his Killen home on the outskirts of Castlederg.

16th: In Augher, County Tyrone, less than 72 hours after the Crossmaglen ambush, IRA Volunteers again fielded heavy-calibre machine-guns as they set up an ambush position not far from the border with Emyvale, County Monaghan. The Volunteers had waited in position for several hours before a suitable target presented itself. Two crafts, both Lynx helicopters were targeted and fire from two heavy machine-guns was concentrated on them. The lead gunship was repeatedly struck and was seen to nose-dive earthwards with smoke and flame billowing from its main body. The second craft, which was a short distance behind the gunship was also fired on; but took evasive action and had landed behind covering hills as the ASU prepared to withdraw from the area.

18th: *"The cynical decision of senior security personnel, not to evacuate railway stations named in secondary warnings, even three hours after a warning device had exploded at Paddington, in the early hours of the morning, was directly responsible for the casualties at Victoria."* With these words the IRA identified clearly how the decision of Scotland Yard 'Anti-terrorist' chief, George Churchill Coleman, and Assistant Chief Inspector, Ian McGregor, of the British Transport Police, not to evacuate railway stations given all the circumstances of which they were aware, was responsible for the tragic death of one man and the injuring of 30 others at Victoria Station.The IRA concluded their statement saying: *"All future warnings should be acted upon."*

26th: Two 3lb Semtex devices exploded simultaneously inside a computer and technical drawing room of the headquarters of British defence contractors, Shorts Brothers in Belfast. The attack was carried out in spite of five recent 'security reviews',

27th: An IRA engineering unit evaded an RUC guard and placed two 4lb Semtex bombs in the grounds of Judge William Johnston's house in Somerton Road. One of the devices was timed to go off at 9.25pm, the other 20 minutes later. At 9pm, the first Volunteer lobbed a single blast bomb into the grounds of the house. As the RUC follow-up operation got under way the first of the time-bombs exploded injuring an RUC man.



WHO FEARS TO SPEAK...?

THE MAKE-UP of Irish traditional, folk and ballad groups tends to be very fluid in every sense. People come and go, appear and re-appear as they do in the hostelries where gigs are got together. The best sessions, the best combination of musicians and singers, are too frequently one-off affairs. That makes this tape all the more valuable; while the group Hot Ash would seem to have established itself, the combination they have assembled on this is unlikely to be repeated.

With over 20 tracks and 90 minutes listening time the "curious combination" has been well and truly recorded for posterity. You have here old-style rebel ballads re-worked, modern freedom songs from home and abroad, traditional instrumentals, Gaeilge agus Béarla, poetry and patriotism, and a flute band thrown in to add spice to the pot. And so it should be for a tape which celebrates the 75th anniversary of the 1916 Rising.

Hot Ash have dedicated this, their first cassette Who Fears to Speak..? to "the young idealists of 1916 in respect and honour of their achievements, and in defiance of those who would belittle the cause for which they struggled". The songs, music and poetry reflect the spirit of that struggle, with no false division between the heroism of the past and that of the present.

Hot Ash vocalists Terry O'Neill and Manuel Keenan are joined by guest singer Bríd Keenan. All three singers are impressive. O'Neill's version of the 19th century ballad John Mitchel, once one of the most popular songs of its kind and memorably recorded in the '70s by the late sean-nós singer Seosamh O hEanaí, is especially good. Bríd Keenan's rendition of Bean an Ghleanna has become well-known at republican gatherings and it is good to see it finally recorded. Her best contribution to this cassette is the song Bloody Sunday, one this reviewer was not familiar with, but which deserves to be much better known and widely sung. In an aside to Bono of U2 the notes emphasise that "this is a rebel song". It is also nice to see the old ballad The Jackets Green revived and given a new flavour.

Quality musicianship and commitment are the hallmarks of this recording. Piper Johnny MacSherry is excellent and the arrangements and backings to songs are of the highest standard. The move from Bríd Keenan's singing of An Raibh Tú Ar an gCarraig into a lively march is especially worthy of note and characteristic of what has been achieved. Get your hands on this cassette.

● *Who Fears To Speak..?* Hot Ash. Price £5.99.plus £1 postage & packaging. Available from Republican Publications, Parnell Square, Dublin 1 or 51/55 Falls Road, Belfast 12.

FORÓGRA SHEACHTAIN NA CÁSCA 1916

POBLACHT na hÉIREANN

RIALTAS SEALADACH PHOBLACHT

NA hÉIREANN

DO MHUINTIR NA hÉIREANN

A MHUINTIR NA hÉIREANN, IDIR FHEARA AGUS MHNÁ: In ainm Dé agus in ainm na nglún d'imigh romhainn agus d'fhág againn mar oidhreacht sean-spiorad na náisiúntachta, tá Éire, trínne, ag gairm a clainne chun a brataigh agus ag bualadh buille ar son a saoirse.

Tar éis di a feara d'eagrú agus d'oiliúint ina heagraíocht rúnda réabhlóideach, Bráithreachas Phoblacht na hÉireann, agus ina heagraíochta míleata poiblí, Óglaigh na hÉireann agus Arm Cathartha na hÉireann, tar éis di a riailbhéasacht d'fhoirbhiú go foighneach agus fanúint go buantseasmhach leis an bhfaill chun gnímh, tá sí ag glacadh na faille sin anois, agus, le cabhair na clainne atá ar deoraíocht uaithi i Meiriceá agus na gcáirde calma cogaidh atá aici san Eoraip, agus, thar gach ní, le muinín as a neart féin, tá sí ag bualadh buille i lán-dóchas go mbéarfaidh sí bua.

Dearbhaímid gur ceart ceannasach do-chlóite ceart mhuintir na hÉireann chun tír na hÉireann, agus fós chun dála na hÉireann a stiúradh gan chosc gan toirmeasc. An forlámhas atá á dhéanamh air le cian d'aimsir ag pobal iasachta agus ag rialtas iasachta, níor mhúch sé an ceart sin ná ní féidir go brách a mhúchadh ach le díthiú phobal na hÉireann. Níl aon ghlún dá dtáinig nár dhearbhaigh pobal na hÉireann a gceart chun saoirse agus ceannais náisiúnta; sé huaire dhearbhaíodar é faoi arm le trí chéad bliain anuas. Ag seasamh ar an gceart bunaidh sin dúinn agus á dhearbhú arís faoi arm os comhair an tsaoil, fógraímid leis seo Poblacht na hÉireann ina Stát Neamhspleách Ceannasach agus cuirimíd ár n-anam féin agus anam ár gcomrádaithe comhraic i ngeall lena saoire agus lena leas agus lena móradh i measc na náisiún.

Dlíonn Poblacht na hÉireann, agus éilíonn leis seo, géillsine ó gach Éireannach idir fhear agus bhean. Ráthaíonn an Phoblacht saoirse chreidimh agus saoirse shibhialta, comhchearta agus comhdheis, dá saoránaigh uile, agus dearbhaíonn gurb é a rún séan agus sonas a lorg don náisiún uile agus do gach roinn de, ag tabhairt geana do chlainn uile an náisiúin mar a chéile, gan aird aici ar an easaontas a cothaíodh eatarthu ag rialtas iasachta agus lér deaghladh mionáireamh díobh ón móráireamh san am atá imithe.

Go dtí go mbeidh an chaoi againn de thoradh ár n-arm chun Buan-Rialtas Náisiúnta a bhunú a bheas iondaitheach do mhuintir na hÉireann go léir agus a toghfar ag fir agus ag mná uile na tíre, déanfaidh an Rialtas Sealadach a bunaítear leis seo cúrsaí sibhialta agus cúrsaí míleata na Poblachta a riaradh thar ceann an phobail.

Cuirimid cúis Phoblacht na hÉireann faoi choimirce Dhia Mór na nUilechumhacht agus iarraimid A bheannacht ar ár n-airm; impímid gan aon duine a bheas ag fónamh sa chúis sin do thabhairt náire dhi le mí-laochas, le mí-dhaonnacht ná le slad. Ar uair na hiarrachta ró-uaisle seo is é dualgas náisiún na hÉireann a chruthú, lena chalmacht agus lena smacht air féin agus le hullmhacht a chlainne chun fulaing ar son an mhaitheasa phoiblí, gur fiú é an árd-chéim atá i ndán dó.

Arna shíniú thar ceann an Rialtais Shealadaigh,

Thos J Clarke

Seán MacDiarmada

Thomas MacDonagh.

P H Pearse

Eamonn Ceannt

James Connolly

Joseph Mc Plunkett

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