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Irish Republican Movement

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EOLAS

IRISH REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT

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Treatment of Irish political prisoners tried in England

What Marx & Engels said on Ireland

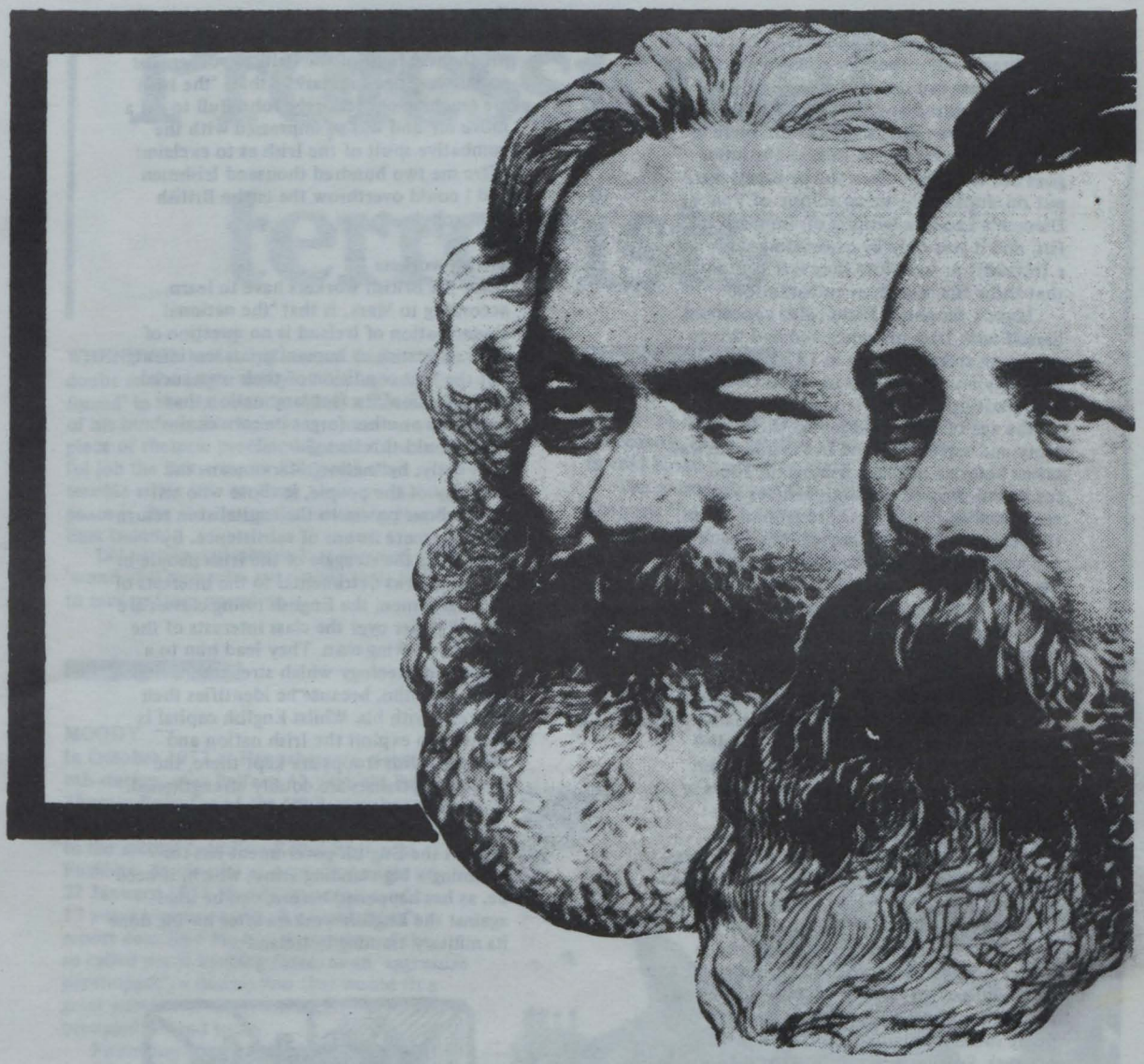
In any consideration of the struggle waged by the Irish for freedom and independence, the names of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels can never be ommitted. In the nineteenth century, from their base in England, Marx and Engels were to the forefront of this struggle, and provide an example for all democrats and socialists concerned with the fight against the domination of small nations by the more powerful, exploiter countries. This of course is no coincidence: the main goal which Marx and Engels set themselves, the liberation of all working men and women from capitalist exploitation, is inextricably linked with the struggle for for independence of all those nations whose economic, social, political and cultural life is dominated by a foreign power. If Marx and Engels were living now, in England, they would be carrying out the present theoretical fight against British rule in Ireland.

Marx and Engels constantly spoke, in the meetings of the First International Working Men's Association and elsewhere, on the Irish question. The fact that their remarks have so much relevance today, one hundred years afterwards, is on the one hand a tribute to their perspicacity and on the other, a crying condemnation of the present reality. Britain is still up to its old games in Ireland, and still uses many of the same methods to maintain its presence there. These two great defenders of the working class also made many more practical contributions to the fight of the Irish working man and woman, such as encouraging them to unionise, attacking the British press for its biased reports on the situation and, very significantly, denouncing the brutal treatment meted out to Irish prisoners rotting in British jails.

Invasions

Their interest in Ireland went so far as to produce a history of that nation (written by Engels but unfortunately not completed) in which, coupled to their admiration for the originality and liveliness of Irish culture and the combative spirit of the Irish people, they analysed the causes of Ireland's ills. We read of the Anglo-Norman invasions of the twelfth century, the brutal wars of the seventeenth, in which the British all but crushed for once and for all the Irish nation as a separate entity, the potato famine of 1845-7, the eviction of one million tenant-farmer families in 1855-66 to make room for one million head of cattle, the subsequent emigrations to America etc. It is quite clearly shown how the plunder of Ireland contributed to the British economic take-off in the times of the Industrial Revolution. The various major uprisings are chronicled for our admiration: that of 1798 by the Society of United Irishmen, the 1848 rebellion of Young Ireland and the Irish Confederation, the Fenian struggle of 1867, etc. In short, there was practically no aspect of Ireland with which Marx and Engels did not concern themselves.

Particularly striking is their condemnation of British brutality with respect to Irish political prisoners, such as the Fenians. They describe how O'Donovan Rossa was left for thirty-five days in a black dungeon, with his hands tied behind his back and forced to eat his food like a dog. How Irish prisoners were sent mad by being sent to lunatic asylums or kept in solitary confinement. How no visits were allowed to certain prisoners. How many died from ill-treatment. The general treatment of Irish political prisoners is described thus:



The political prisoners are dragged from one prison to another as if they were wild animals. They are forced to keep company with the vilest knaves; they are obliged to clean the pans used by these wretches, to wear the shirts and flannels which have previously been worn by these criminals, many of whom are suffering from the vilest diseases, and to wash in the same water. (. . .) A visiting cage was installed for the Fenian prisoners. It consists of three compartments divided by partitions of thick iron bars; the jailer occupies the central compartment and the prisoner and his friends can only see each other through this double row of bars.

In the docks you can find prisoners who eat all sorts of slugs, and frogs are considered dainties at Chatham. General Thomas Burke said he was not surprised to find a dead mouse floating in the soup. The convicts say that it was a bad day for them when the Fenians were sent to the prisons (The prison regime has become much more severe.).

(p.165 of **Marx and Engels on Ireland: The English treatment of Fenian Prisoners)**

The treatment (frogs and slugs excepted) is not so different today, as can be seen from the PAC Bulletin: beatings by police and warders, long stretches of solitary, tight restriction on visits, encouragement given to other prisoners to attack the Irish, cells in the vicinity of the mentally deranged or sexually perverted, etc.

Protests

The International Working Men's Association protested many times at the treatment and conditions suffered by Irish prisoners. This is what it quoted from a letter to the British press from an Irish Conservative MP: 'for the first six months no stranger whatever can be allowed to visit a convict undergoing the separate system at Pentonville (ie solitary confinement) . . . The prisoners are not 'allowed to see their friends outside the prison', nor are they allowed to see them inside the prison; nor are they allowed to see each other. Each prisoner has a solitary world of his own, thirteen feet by seven. A portion of this cell is occupied by a water-closet, and within two yards of this he takes his solitary meals, performs his solitary task

work, and rests at night. If he omits to scrub and clean out his cell every morning, or if he breaks any other law of his little world, the directors can order him to be flogged, and put on bread and water for twenty-eight days in another little world where there is no light.' The effects of this, so the letter goes on, were that when the prisoners were put on ships to the penal colony of Van Diemen's Land, 'a number of them fell into fits, and it was only by associating them for a fortnight or so before they left Pentonville that these fits ceased on embarkation.'

Marx's daughter, Jenny, also concerned herself with Irish prisoners and had this to say, in an article written in 1870: 'Last Saturday a young Irishman called **Gunner Hood** left prison after serving four years. At the age of 19 he had joined the English army and served England in Canada. He was taken before a military tribunal in 1866 for having written seditious articles and sentenced to two years' hard labour. When the sentence was pronounced Hood took his cap and threw it into the air shouting 'Long live the Irish republic!'. This impassioned cry cost him dear. He was sentenced an extra two years in prison and fifty strokes for good measure. This was carried out in the most atrocious manner. Hood was attached to a plough and two strapping blacksmiths were armed with cat-o'-nine tails. There is no equivalent term in French for the English *knout*. Only the Russians and the English know what is meant by this. Like draws to like.' The so-called 'democratic' British regime is thus shown to be every bit as sadistic as the most savagely barbaric government in nineteenth century Europe. It hasn't changed much, has it? Ask those Birmingham prisoners. Jenny Marx continues with a reference to the Fenian Colonel Burke as having been 'reduced to a pitiful state in which he can no longer recognise his closest relatives' and further remarks: 'I could add many more names to this list of Irish martyrs. Suffice it to say that since 1866, when there was a raid on the *Irish People's* offices, **20 Fenians have died or gone mad** in the prisons of humanitarian England.'

In another article to the same French republican newspaper, the *Marseillaise*, Jenny takes up the case of O'Donovan Rossa, and quotes long extracts from a letter which he had managed to smuggle out of jail and in which he describes being beaten and stripped naked, put on bread and water, witnessing the slow death of a fellow-prisoner, John Lynch, from the cold, and being harnessed to a cart with a rope tied round his neck that all but strangled him. Rossa's letter is one of the most eloquent documents that has been penned against British savagery towards the Irish.

Marx and Engels point out also how the question of Ireland's right to independence (like the whole past history of the nation since the British invasion) is locked together with the fight in Britain carried out by the British people against their own ruling classes. Marx thought at first that Irish independence would be achieved through the victory of the British working class over their masters, and then came round to the opposite point of view, ie that a victory in Ireland would spark off the real fight of the British workers for socialism. Engels remarked that: 'the Irish are teaching our leisurely John Bull to get a move on' and was so impressed with the combative spirit of the Irish as to exclaim: 'Give me two hundred thousand Irishmen and I could overthrow the entire British monarchy'.

British workers

What the British workers have to learn, according to Marx, is that 'the national emancipation of Ireland is no question of abstract justice or humanitarian sentiment, but the first condition of their own social emancipation'. In fact 'any nation that oppresses another forges its own chains'. Why should this be so?

Firstly, by 'nation' Marx means the majority of the people, ie those who sell their labour power to the capitalist in return for their mere means of subsistence. By presenting the struggle of the Irish people in a false light as detrimental to the interests of all Englishmen, the English ruling classes are able to paper over the class interests of the English working man. They lead him to a chauvinist ideology which strengthens their hand over him, because he identifies their interests with his. Whilst English capital is allowed to exploit the Irish nation and whilst English troops are kept there, the English capitalists are doubly strengthened. Marx commented in 1870 (and how true this still is today!) that 'Ireland is the only pretext the English government has for retaining a big standing army, which, if need be, as has happened before, can be used against the English workers after having done its military training in Ireland'.

The materials in this issue of Eolas which deal with the treatment of Irish political prisoners tried in England, is taken from THE IRISH PRISONER, published by the Prisoners Aid Committee, London.

Professional terrorists

WHENEVER somebody casts a shadow of a doubt on the impartiality of the 'security forced' in the six counties Merlyn Rees or one of his innumerable lackeys conjures up a stirring piece of rhetoric proclaiming 'what a wonderful job the Brit army is doing and what a terrible strain it is on them trying to maintain peace in the six occupied counties in North East Ireland.

Let us take a closer look at some of these 'wonderful men who are risking their lives' to save us from ourselves.

MOODY

In October 1973 at Hannahstown electricity sub-station, near Belfast, 41 year old Private Thomas Forsythe of the UDR was shot dead by David Moody (26) who was then attached to the second battalion Royal Regiment of Fusiliers. At his trial at Armagh Assizes on 27 January 1975 Moody was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment. A psychiatrists's report described Moody, a member of the so called peace keeping force, as an 'aggressive psychopath', a description that would fit a great number of Brits, serving in North East occupied Ireland today.

Following a riot in the Bogside, Derry, on 8 July 1971 a 28 year old welder, James Cusack was shot dead by a Brit soldier.

During his hearing of a claim for compensation by Mr Joseph Cusack, the dead man's father, the Brit responsible claimed that James Cusack was armed with a rifle and was taking aim at him. The Brit, whose identity was not revealed and subsequently became known as Private A, claimed that the shot which killed James Cusack was fired in self defence. Miss Nell McCafferty, an Irish Times reporter who witnessed the murder, was asked in the High Court if Cusack had been armed with a rifle replied, 'Absolutely NOT'. Miss McCafferty also denied that anyone had removed a rifle from near Cusack's body after he had been shot dead. The judge Mr Justice Gibson came to the conclusion that Cusack was unarmed, which ruled out Private A's claim of self-defence, but was 'GUILTY of contributory negligence'. Mr Gibson went on to say that Private A had a 'momentary error of observation'. Another momentary error by the security forces, an error that cost a man his life.

Mr Joseph Cusack was awarded the paltry sum of £375.00 damages plus £40 funeral expenses as compensation by the authorities for the loss of his son's life.

FOXFORD

On the 28 February 1973 a twelve year old schoolboy, Kevin Heatley, was shot down in cold blood on the streets of Newry.

The perpetrator of this foul murder was a Corporal Francis Foxford (22) of the Hampshire Regiment who was on his first 'tour' of duty in the six counties. At his trial at Belfast City Commission, in March 1974, Foxford's counsel claimed that Kevin Heatley was armed and fired on Foxford whilst he was patrolling the Derrybeg Estate. Unfortunately Healey's 'weapon' had disappeared into thin air after the incident and could not be produced in court.

On the 15 March Corporal Foxford was convicted of the manslaughter of Kevin Heatley and was sentenced to three years imprisonment.

Passing sentence Mr Justice Kelly said that he had found Foxford's evidence unreliable and unacceptable in many matters. He was satisfied that Foxford had fired an unaimed shot without cause of justification!

But then Mr Justice Kelly went on to express his sympathy with Brit soldiers who had to endure the daily threat of death or injury. Perhaps Mr Kelly thinks that ordinary working class catholics and protestants don't have to endure this daily threat from sectarian assasins and murder gangs such as the SAS. 'You have suffered all this', Mr Kelly continued, 'with cheerfulness, dignity and restraint'. We had a sample of Corporal Foxford's 'cheerfulness', as Mr Kelly puts it, when as he was walking away from Kevin Heatley's lifeless body he remarked 'Next please'. We could also see his dignity as he posed for heart-rendering photographs with his wife and their young son's teddy-bear for the British scab press and their propaganda exercise which was used to glorify their young murderer. And restraint? Well if shooting an unarmed schoolboy with an automatic 7.62 self loading rifle, is restraint I would advise anybody who knows Corporal Foxford not to get into dispute with him just in case he looses his temper.

Well at last it looked as if some justice was coming to North East Occupied Ireland, must to the dismay of the Tory party and the British Army, but it was too much to hope for. The Brits couldn't have one of their soldier lackeys languishing in one of HM prisons just for shooting somebody from the working class, and Irish at that. Within a week of being sentenced Foxford was transferred from the six counties to Liverpool prison for his own 'protection'. (Its amazing compared to Foxford's case how long it takes the British to transfer Irish political prisoners to their own country).

On 21 March 1974 Foxford was granted bail of £3000 in the Belfast High Court pending his appeal against conviction and sentence.

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Three months later on 21 June Foxford walked out of Belfast High Court a FREEMAN, after his three year sentence was quashed by the court of Criminal Appeal. The three men who freed Foxford were Lord Justice Curran and Jones and Lord Chief Justice Sir Robert Lowry who has popped up recently as Chairman of the ill fated conventional Assembly.

As NICRA said in a statement issued after Foxford was freed, 'This case is yet another in which it has been shown that there is one law for the security forces and another for civilians.'

[redacted]

JONES

On 7 August 1974 a Brit patrol called at a farmhouse in Limehill, Pomeroy Co Tyrone. After talking to Mrs McElhone, who ran the farm with her husband and their son Patrick, the Brits obtained permission to search the farm area. Approximately an hour after the patrol had arrived 23 year old Patrick McElhone, returned home from working in a hay field and passed a number of Brits in the farmyard on his way to tea. As he sat down at the table two Brits, with blackened faces opened the door and called him out. He left the table and went outside to see what they wanted. Mrs McElhone went to the window to observe what was happening as she was naturally concerned about what was going on. As Patrick left the house he was shaken by one of the British thugs and was then pushed towards the gate leading to the road. Thinking her son was going to be arrested Mrs McElhone summoned her husband who then went out to investigate. Mr McElhone saw Patrick been pushed into a field and 'shot in the back' by Lance Corporal Roy Jones of the Royal Regiment of Wales. When asked by Mr McElhone the reason for shooting his son a Brit murdered replied, 'Get in you fucking slobber or we'll shoot you too'.

At Jones' trial at Belfast City Commission in November 1974, where he was charged with murder, a Detective Inspector told the Court that when Jones was charged he replied 'NOT GUILTY'. 'It was an accident'. It was later stated in court by Corporal Gwynn Wood and other members of the patrol that when Jones was asked what had happened he said something like 'He was running away'.

As in most cases of this nature British Justice prevailed once again and Mr Justice McDermoth returned a verdict of 'NOT GUILTY'.

At the inquest on Patrick McElhone, Sgt Harrhy, who was Jones' platoon commander on the day of the incident, said that none of the stipulated circumstances in the 'Yellow card' (the Brit rule book regarding opening fire and designed to protect civilians) existed at the time of the shooting. The very first clause in the yellow card is that a soldier should only open fire on the orders of his on-the-spot commander. When asked if he had ordered Jones to open fire Sgt Harrhy replied 'NO.. Sgt Harrhy also stated that Patrick McElhone was UNARMED and that he had heard no warning given as McElhone was supposedly running away.

Patrick McElhone was regarded throughout the local community as a hard working young man who was devoted to his mother and father and had no connections with any political organisation yet his murderer, as in the cases of James Cusack and Kevin Heatley was deemed fit to walk the streets as you and I.

It seems that there is one law for the British Murderer's who occupy North East Ireland and one for the Irish working class.

If these legalised British terrorists (in and out of uniform) are your idea of Law and Order Mr Merlyn Rees then I suggest to you to take your 'peace keepers' and SAS killers and get the hell out of Ireland. Leave Ireland to the Irish working class.

ROGER CASEMENT

Roger Casement's road to the scaffold of Pentonville prison where he was hanged on 3 August 1916 had led him through the jungles of Africa and South America and his exposures of the cruelty of colonial rule had embarassed the British ruling classes as well as earning him their hatred. Casement's involvement with the attempt of his own country to cast off colonial rule and his belief that both Catholic and Protestant are equally Irish led him to the dock where he was charged under a treason law passed before the conquest of Ireland. He was subjected to the obscenity of being prosecuted by E E Smith, Lord Birkenhead, who although a member of the British government had been guilty of the treason of which Casement was accused–a treason which he had actually committed on the colonised soil of Ireland.

Casement's great speech from the dock serves to remind us of the real issues behind not only his case but that of those who had preceded and who would follow him. Casement addressed himself not to the bewigged nonentities who had just condemned him to be hanged, but to the ordinary people of England and Ireland. He appealed not to the legal niceties of mediaeval statutes but to the common sense of what is just. He stood before the court to defend his political actions and not to ask for mercy. He pointed out the fundamental injustice which had been committed against him:

> *And what is the fundamental charter of an Englishman's liberty? That he shall be tried by his peers. With all respect I assert this court is to me, an Irishman, not a jury of my peers to try me in this vital issue for it is patent to every man of conscience that I have an indefensible right, if tried at all under this statute of high treason, to be tried in Ireland, before an Irish court and by an Irish jury.*

Thus Casement pinpointed the issue–the reversal of roles imposed by colonialism. What would have been patriotism for an Englishman, defence of his country, was treason for an Irishman. Casement was in the dock as a scapegoat and he knew it. The leaders of the Rising had been shot out of hand; now before the world England could by subjecting Casement to the sadism of a protracted trial for high treason followed inevitably by a 'guilty' verdict, justify the murders of which she was already guilty. In the same way today, every Irish political prisoner who is found 'guilty' by a British court, is used to 'justify' the brutality of the British Army in the Six Counties–they, like Casement, are found to have committed the 'crime' of giving their allegiance to Ireland and not to England. This, as Casement pointed out:

> *is the condemnation of English Rule, of English-made law, of English Government in Ireland, that it dare not rest on the will of the Irish people, but exists in defiance of their will–that it is a rule derived not from right, but from Conquest. Conquest gives no title, and if it exists over the body it fails over the mind . . . It is from the law of Conquest without*

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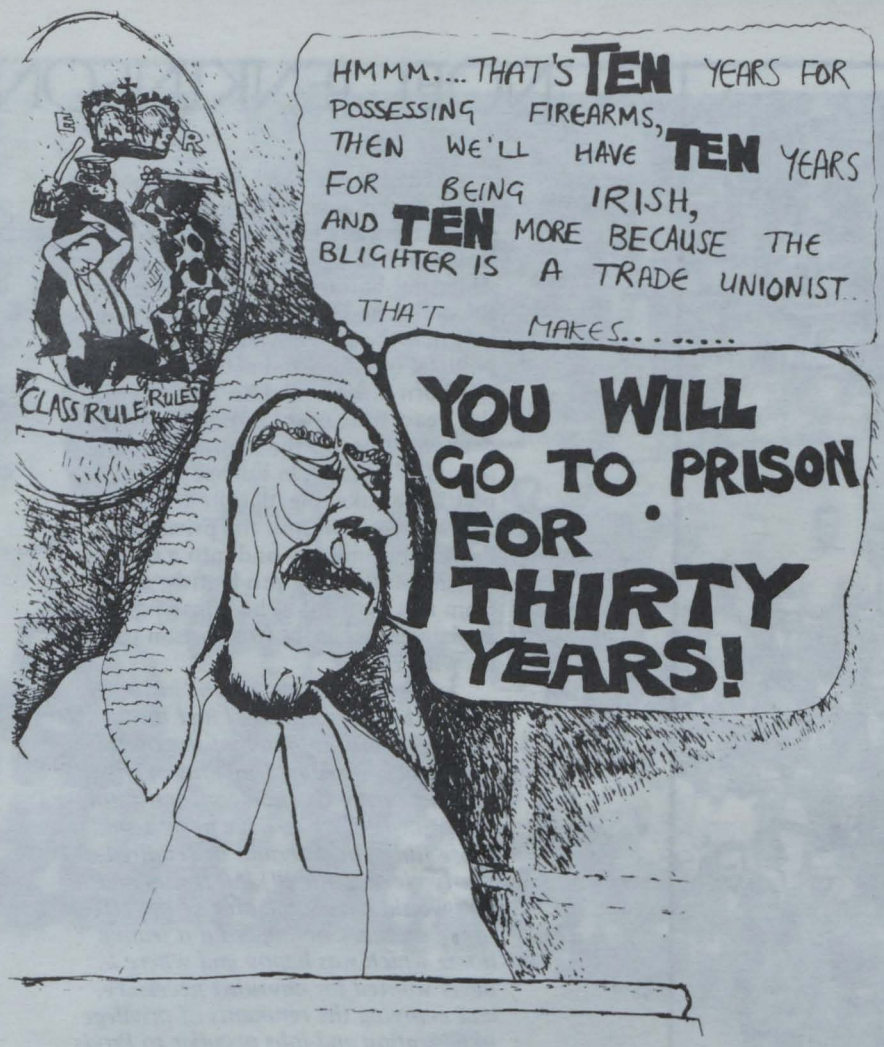
NOEL JENKINSON

at a T&GWU shop steward's conference in Chichester, now serving a life sentence of "at least 30 years' for a crime he did not commit

NOEL JENKINSON

Noel Jenkinson is at present serving a sentence of 'at least thirty years'. He was tried in October and November of 1972 ostensibly for the Aldershot barracks bomb but in effect the police had so little evidence against him that the trial hinged on Noel's political opinions and activities. Noel was born in 1929 and his most formative years were spent during the time of the revelations of the enormity of the results of Fascism in Europe. His political awakening, despite the fact that he was born into the privileged Protestant minority and into a culture which is intimately pro-British, dated from this moment as he himself explained in a letter from prison to his wife:

When I was seventeen (in 1946) and in the Boys Brigade I had the horrifying but in the event the useful experience of seeing the films of the opening of the German concentration camps in 1945. You have never seen those films (they should be required yearly viewing for all) but if you had you would have some idea of the effect it had on me. Coming as I did from a home which was happy and where I never wanted for anything necessary, and enjoying the remnants of privilege in education and jobs peculiar to Prods I was shocked to discover that such conditions could exist in what we were told was the best of all possible worlds. Well the result was I made a firm resolve to fight fascism wherever and whenever I met it. This resolve led me to read everything I could get my hands on about Fascism. Amongst the books I got was Connolly's Labour in Irish History. *It was then I discovered that what the Germans had done was merely a refinement and more efficient method of carrying out what had been British policy for centuries. Mass forced movements of population–first used by the Brits; genocide–practised continuously by the Brits; concentration camps–first used by the Brits in the Boer War; torture and arbitrary arrest, summary execution–every one of them used by the Brits against the Irish people. The reason for the obvious reluctance of the Brits to oppose Hitler now became clear for they had from the very beginning behaved as a professor urging restraint and cunning on a brilliant pupil. They had never opposed fascism as such but merely disputed the tactics used by Hitler.*



Fascism

Noel's battle against fascism began when he was seventeen and continues to this day. When he emigrated to England to work he became involved in the trade union movement

When the Civil Rights agitation started in the Six Counties, Noel joined the Civil Rights Solidarity Campaign and became its chairman. He was in the forefront in London in exposing the brutality of British imperialism in the Six Counties which seemed to him another manifestation of the attack by fascism on the working class which had concerned him since his youth.

Arrest

This is the background to the arrest of Noel in early 1972 for the Aldershot barracks bomb which had been carried out by the Official IRA. Noel and his wife had had their home raided in one of the many 'routine' raids on politically active Irish people in London. It would be naive in the extreme to imagine that Noel's political views were not known to the police. A receipt from an Aldershot shop was 'found' in Noel's flat, and he was arrested and charged. His wife too was illegally arrested and Noel was threatened that she would be given a ten year sentence unless he 'co-operated'.

At the committal it was revealed that the receipt had been accidentally 'lost' in Noel's flat and that in fact it belonged to one of the Hampshire CID, Detective Chief Inspector Smith.

Noel's trial continued however and turned into a trial of his political views in which the judge, the supposedly impartial referee, took an eager part in cross-examining Noel about his working class allegiance. At one point, Judge Sebag Shaw asked Noel if he would describe himself as anti-capitalist. Noel said he preferred to call himself pro-working class. All this took place before a jury in Winchester which is one of the most conservative cities in England and with a very strong regimental tradition. Noel was condemned out of his own mouth – as a working class militant and Socialist. The Aldershot bomb had been

in retaliation for the deaths of 13 people in Derry on Bloody Sunday. The man who had led the paratroopers and commanded them to carry out the bloody execution of unarmed civilians was awarded an OBE by the Queen.

When Noel stood in the dock in Winchester, the judge and jury saw not the man who had carried out the Aldershot bombing, for the prosecution did not prove that Noel had ever been in Aldershot and the judge said they had no need to, but the typification of that Irish spirit of revolt against British rule which Bloody Sunday had been intended to curb. Noel was the embodiment of the determination of generations of Irish rebels who have made every English imperialist want to reach

for a gun. Having no gun handy, and being committed to the pretence of a civilised ritual, they did the next best thing—the judge passed a life sentence on Noel with a recommendation that he spend at least THIRTY YEARS in prison.

They had tried to silence one voice which had spoken out loud and clear for the freedom of the working people of England and Ireland. Exactly a year later, before the same judge and in the same court, a group of young people from Belfast were also given life sentences for 'conspiring to cause explosions'. On this occasion too, Sebag Shaw tried to add a thirty year sentence—but had to be told by one of the prisoners that he could not do that!

Victim

Noel, like all Irish political prisoners, is the victim of a desperate attempt by the British ruling classes to silence and destroy those who have opposed their brutal policies in Ireland—Including those implemented by the neo-colonial government in the Free State. British socialists are increasingly feeling the effects of increased repression as capitalist policies totter and the two imprisoned pickets—Des Warren and Eric Tomlinson—have been treated in prison with the same callous brutality as Irish political prisoners. It is part of our job to make sure that these brave men and women are not silenced. In the case of Noel Jenkinson, the crudely manifest instances of victimisation have led the PAC to decide to take his case to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. Noel was refused leave to appeal in England and as usual in capitalist society, justice is only available for those who can pay for it. The cost of the Strasbourg case is £2000 at least, a small price for a man's freedom but one which has to come out of the pockets of ordinary working people in Ireland and England. We hope you will support it and help us free Noel and so enable him to continue his fight.

Send donations to:

CABHAIR

Defence & Aid Fund

30 Gardiner Place,
Dublin 1
Ireland

Eamonn Smullen was arrested on an arms charge in Huddersfield in September 1969 and taken to Wakefield prison where, for four weeks, he was not allowed to speak to **Gerry Doherty** who was charged with him. Both men were held as Category A prisoners in the hospital at Wakefield for 'security' reasons. They both had to wear the 'high security risk' prison uniform with a yellow band on it although Doherty was a first offender and Smullen had a previous conviction before a military court in Ireland which had later been squashed. They appeared in court handcuffed to the police at all remand hearings and when the trial started at Leeds Crown Court in February 1970 they were taken each day from Wakefield in police cars with headlights on and sirens blaring. There was an armed guard on the court which was also patrolled by police dogs.

After conviction (Smullen got 8 years for conspiracy to purchase arms and Doherty got 5, both reduced to 5 years and 3 on appeal) both men were classified as Category A prisoners although first offenders and serving less than ten years. Smullen had no relatives in this country and until July 1971 he was refused visits not only from all those who could not satisfy the police that they knew him before conviction but also from those who did, but for undisclosed reasons were not acceptable to the police. This left him with only one visitor who was allowed to see him.

During this time, which was spent like the bulk of his sentence in Gartree, there were frequent searches of his cell and his mail was subject to special censorship and was always late in coming down to him. It was not until Vanessa Redgrave applied to visit him to discuss a play that he had written that he was—nominally—taken off Category A. When Bernadette Devlin visited him in October 1972 she was told that he was still a Category A prisoner and that therefore the person who had accompanied her and who visited him during normal visiting times would not be allowed in with her. During her visit the governor took notes but the visit of the local Tory MP, Farr, was not supervised.

During this time, copies of Civil Rights and Republican papers were stopped on the grounds that they were not conducive to 'good order' or alternatively that they were 'connected' with his original offence. Eamonn pointed out that sex-offenders were

allowed to have sex magazines. One paper that he was allowed to have in Gartree, *Rosc Catha,* was stopped when he was moved to Nottingham prison after the riots in Gartree in which he took no part. His complaints about stopped papers and letters always met with the reply that they were against the rules but repeated requests for copies of the rules met with no success.

He was refused parole two weeks after applying, and again one year later when he had got two 'A' levels and was starting the Open University course and had earned full remission. He was told that the reason he gave for wanting parole—so that he could work as he had done in England for the previous 15 years as a carpenter—was not satisfactory. He was also refused permission to take part in the hostel working-out scheme three weeks before his final release after representations to the Home Office by the NCCL and two MPs.

Pat O'Sullivan and Conor Lynch were tried on arms charges at the Old Bailey in Spetember 1969. Despite their ages, 22 and 19 years, and the fact that they were first offenders they were both given seven year sentences and refused leave to appeal after what their solicitor described as 'severe obstruction by the Home Office'. They were charged with attempted robbery at an arms factory but during the trial guns which did not form part of the case against them were on 'display' in court. They were Category A prisoners during the whole of their sentences and Lynch was sent to Wakefield Prison despite his age and both were refused parole and home leave despite their good behaviour in prison and despite representations by MPs. With two weeks of his sentence to run, O'Sullivan was moved from Hull, where he had friends who had offered to take him for 'home leave', to Strangeways where he was kept in solitary confinement apparently as a punishment for the agitation which had gone on about his case. There he was threatened by warders who told him that he was not out yet and that if he put a foot wrong he wouldn't be leaving. Conor Lynch lost two weeks remission in Wakefield for shaking hands with Gerry Doherty.

Joe Farrington was sentenced to four years at Birmingham in March 1972 for possession of detonators and his appeal was turned down. He was told that if had been older, he was 19, he would have been given a heavier sentence, but despite his age he was put in the adult wing of Stafford pirson. He complained that the only education courses open to him were business and commercial courses. (He was an apprentice glass designer at the time of his conviction). His application for full-time education courses was refused, and he was allowed three afternoons a week to study for three 'A' levels. Two tutors from outside applied to visit him but they never received a reply. For much of this time the library at Stafford was closed for 'security' reasons.

In March 1973, he heard of his father's imminent death from cancer and requested parole on compassionate grounds which was refused as was his request for parole to visit his father in Birmingham for one day. Attempts to get the parole decision reversed by his solicitors, the family doctor and friends continued for months until his father eventually moved to Dublin where he died. Joe was then refused parole to attend the funeral which was in December 1973, even though he was due for release in August 1974. On release, having served his whole time as an adult offender, he was told that he was a young offender and therefore came under the Criminal Justice Act, 1967, Sections 60 &ff and was out on licence until the end of his sentence and could be picked up at any time if his behaviour was 'unsatisfactory'.

Jim Flynn was given a two year sentence for illegal possession of a gun at Nottingham in December 1972. He complained that the Special Branch had threatened to have him shot in Northern Ireland (he is from Crossmaglen) if he did not pass on information. He refused to co-operate but the judge at his trial mentioned his 'co-operation' as the reason for giving him a 'light' sentence and as a result of this his family and friends in the Crossmaglen area, which is a very strong Republican area, had to issue denials on his behalf to all local papers. In Lincoln and Winson Green where he served his sentence he was refused all copies of *Rosc Catha* sent direct by the publishers. In Winson Green during Christmas of 1973 he was refused all cards sent by 'known IRA sympathisers'. Conversations over the phone with the assistant governor failed to reveal how this decision was arrived at

Bobby Gallagher was sentenced to six years for having detonators 'under his control' in Leeds in February 1974 and his appeal was turned down. Before conviction, Bobby was a member

of the National Executive of Clann na-h-Eireann and an active member of UCATT' During August he wrote a letter which was smuggled out of Hull describing conditions of work in Hull

Part of the letter ran:

'We are being made to work in a shed 20yds x 10yds. There are six very big tables in it and sixteen prisoners are being made to make toy soldiers. Now listen to this, we are supposed to make up sixteen gross per week per man for a wage of 60p . . . It's the brain-child of the Deputy Governor Mr Williams who calls it an incentive bonus. He has worked it like this. First gross 9½p, and it goes up 2½p per gross until you reach 10 gross and, believe this or believe it not, after 10 gross you only get 1p per gross until you reach 16 gross . . . These soldiers are sold in the shops at 30p a time. 16 gross being £688.

On 21 September Bobby was dragged from his cell and thrown in a punishment cell by four warders who attacked him with batons. One tried to choke him as a result of which he lost consciousness. He was told by the Governor that he was being given 14 days solitary as a result of the publication of his letter in *Rosc Catha*.

To date, the only person allowed to visit Bobby are his wife and children. Those who visited him while he was on remand in Armley have been turned down by the Home Office after a delay of six months in processing their applications. Among those turned down are his brother-in-law, and two close friends one of whom had already been allowed in to visit him, although he was told afterwards that this had been a 'mistake'. His wife complained of seeing bruise marks on his throat when she visited him while he was in solitary, where he was only allowed a mat on the floor and where he only had one hour's exercise each day. Leading up to this, Bobby had complained of constant

It's really good of them to go to so much trouble to see that these Irish get a fair trial.

petty harassment—he was always served last with cold food and got cold bath water, and constant searches and checks were made on his cell and his uniform. His wife's home has been raided by Special Branch and local police four times since June, and on each occasion she has been questioned about Bobby, about who visits him and who visits her.

All the cases dealt with so far concern the treatment of prisoners serving less than ten years and all of whom were first offenders. Nevertheless, they have all been treated as dangerous prisoners whose escape would be a 'danger to the state'. Much of the treatment they receive in prison arises out of their trials when their political opinions were put before the jury and when the 'security' measures by the police were given wide publicity in the area from which the jurymen were drawn. Eamonn Smullen's defence counsel, Mr Platts-Mills, asked the judge, Mr Kilner-Brown, to disallow the putting before the jury of membership cards, including those of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association and Clann na-h-Eireann (Official Sinn Fein). But the judge refused his request by saying: 'It is flying in the face of common sense when one is dealing with allegations of the purchase of firearms that there must be for want of a better term inevitably, as it were, a natural part of such a charge when is dealing with conspiracy, what might be called motive. What is the point of it? What is the purpose of it? Once one is involved in allegations of conspiracy, dealing with large quantities of arms, it seems to me to be highly relevant to that evidence, if it is available of membership of some organisation'. (Quote as in transcript).

Subsequently, he allowed copies of *The United Irishman, The Memoirs of General Grivas,* as well as arms pamphlets and membership cards and evidence of Eamonn's visit to Cuba were all produced by the prosecution. There is no doubt that this evidence must have served to prejudice the prisoners in the eyes of the Leeds jury and label them as IRA prisoners, although after the guilty verdict was returned the judge said it was to their credit that they had not been proved to be members of the IRA.

During the trial of **Pat O'Sullivan** and **Conor Lynch**, the judge, Mr McKinnon, allowed the prosecution to ask Conor if it was true that his uncle had been Chief of Staff of the IRA in the thirties—twenty years before he was born. He allowed the prosecution to ask Pat who Cathal Goulding was. When he refused to answer, the judge told him: 'I must remind you that this is not a political trial, it is a criminal trial. You are withholding evidence from the jury. If you don't answer these questions I could send you to prison for a very long time.'

The 70th Ard Fheis of Sinn Fein will take place at the Mansion House, Dublin from January 16th through 18th. 1976. We would ask your organisation to send a greeting.

BELFAST VICTIMS FUND—

The response to the Belfast Victims Fund appeal has been tremendous. To date over £2,000 has been received and receipted. The January issue of THE UNITED IRISHMAN is carrying a list of some of those subscriptions and messages of solidarity received in Belfast by the Republican Clubs. OUR THANKS TO ALL WHO HELPED.

Sean O Cionnaith,
On behalf of the Belfast Victims Fund.

title to the reason, judgement and affection of my own countrymen that I appeal.

By the use of the notorious diaries, on the advice of Ernie Blackwell who was legal adviser to the Home Office, the British government could make it appear that Casement was to be hanged not as a patriot like the Czech nationalist Thomas Masaryk whom the English professed to admire, but as a pervert and a pederast. So Casement was punished for betraying his 'class' for having revealed what was going on in Putamayo and the Congo and for siding with the oppressed peoples of Ireland.

Casement was hanged after being 'degraded' from the knighthood and after spending time in the Tower of London where he was not even allowed to change the clothes which he had been wearing when he was captured in Tralee. In Pentonville his last letters to his family were stopped by Blackwell on the grounds that they contravened national security and he was refused the last letter from his sister. His treatment followed the pattern of brutality handed out to political prisoners by the British authorities which has still not ceased.

Casement should be remembered for what he represents as a victim of British 'justice' and in his own words in the last speech which was not only his final testament but a message for future generations of Irish men and women:

If we are to be indicted as criminals, to be shot as murderers, to be imprisoned as convicts because our offence is that we love Ireland more than we love our lives, then I know not what virtue resides in any offer of self-government held out to brave men on such terms. Self government is our right, a thing born in us at birth, a thing no more to be doled out to us or witheld from us by another people than the right to life itself... and Ireland, that has wronged no man, that has injured no land, that has sought no dominion over others - Ireland is treated today among the nations of the world as if she was a convicted criminal.'

Now over sixty years later, Ireland still has not won true self government and while the farce of Casement's trial has been repeated time and again this century, the true criminals continue to fatten indiscriminately on the spoils of colonialism and neo-colonialism brought to them by the exploited resources and labour of the peoples of the Congo, Putomayo and Ireland.

CHRISTMAS DRAW:

The Christmas Draw in aid of the International Affairs Bureau of the Irish Republican Movement proved a great success. Instead of the four prizes which were listed on the raffle ticket we have decided to give three extra prizes so great were the returns. To supporters of the Irish people's struggle for National Liberation around the world we thank you for helping with this Draw.

The following won prizes;

1st. Mrs Anne Prendiville,
2638 Irving St.,
San Francisco,
Calif. U.S.A.

2nd. Mr. Frank Lynch,
5/29 Darling St.,
Bronte, Sydney,
AUSTRALIA.

3rd. Roswitha Raab,
Ehrenhalde 20
D 7000 Stuttgart 1,
West Germany.

4th. Fergal McCann,
13 Monagh Crescent,
Turf Lodge,
Belfast.

5th. G. Scerri Taylor,
52 Capuccini Str.,
Floriana, Malta.

6th. K. Delaney,
24 Chatsworth Ave.,
London SW 20

7th. Wataru Yakushiji,
635 Terao,
Kawagoe City,
JAPAN.