Remembering Bloody Sunday

Sunday 30 January 2022 marked the 50th anniversary of the massacre by the British Army of 14 innocent people in Derry. The BBC and RTE completely ignored a large commemorative march in Derry, addressed by among others former Westminster MP Bernadette Devlin McAliskey and civil rights activist Eamonn McCann who were on the original peaceful march in 1972 and were fired on by the British soldiers. Below we publish a report on the march by Irish revolutionary socialist John Meehan, from the Irish political blog Tomás Ó Flatharta.

On Monday 31 January 1972, the day after the march, in the British House of Commons Bernadette Devlin (now McAliskey) then the independent socialist MP for Mid-Ulster, tried to challenge the lies of the Tory Home Secretary Reginald Maudling for twice claiming that it was the marchers who had fired on the British soldiers of the Paratroop Regiment – rather than the other way round. She was denied the opportunity to speak and berated for trying to tell the truth – that a British minister was a liar. Bernadette famously walked across the chamber and slapped Maudling on the face as a "proletarian protest". against his lies Bernadette later said she regretted she had not got him by the throat. We reproduce a link to an interview with Bernadette on that day explaining why she did it. It took several decades and an independent inquiry before it was finally confirmed that those shot by the British soldiers were entirely innocent, and that Maudling had lied to the House of Commons – but we don't think he'll be the last British minister to be found out as a liar!

Irish revolutionary socialist organisation Socialist Democracy is holding an online meeting on the politics

of the last 100 years of the Partition of Ireland, with John McAnulty speaking – Tuesday 1 February 2022 19.00 7pm London/Dublin time. http://socialistdemocracy.org/RecentArticles/DiscussionIreland100YearsOfPartitionCarnivalOfReaction.html

> *The feedback I got all week, writes Tomás Ó Flatharta , was that the 2022 Bloody Sunday March in Derry today (Sunday 30 January 2022) would be huge. This turned out to be true. An initial report is below.*
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> *Here is the intriguing bit. The mass media (e.g. RTÉ Radio Bulletin this morning at 8.00am) reported lots of other stuff – for example, Dublin government taoiseach Mícheál Martin laying a wreath – and said nothing about the march this afternoon at 2.30pm in Derry featuring speeches by Bernadette McAliskey, Éamonn McCann, and others. RTÉ is a public service broadcaster in Ireland largely funded by a license fee. It comes under pressure from the "great and the good" to toe the line and exclude radical voices. And sometimes it gets things spectacularly wrong – today was an example.*
>
> *What is the key political message today : Prosecute the Generals!We will keep fighting – and, eventually, we might win. If we don't fight, we definitely lose.*


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JOE McGLINCHEY
SOLID FUELS


JUSTICE FOR THE CRAIGAVON 2
THERE MAY BE TIMES WHEN WE ARE POWERLESS TO PREVENT INJUSTICE BUT THERE MUST NEVER BE A TIME WHEN WE FAIL TO PROTEST.
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Derry Bloody Sunday March 2022; Irish Soccer Player from Derry, James McClean, wears a black 14 armband; Craigavon 2 Campaigners on the Derry March; Derry Trades Council on the 2022 March (main picture)

It is very similar to what happened on the day of the 2016 100th anniversary monster parade in Dublin supporting the 1916 Rising – the Irish establishment media disgraced itself reporting on tiny religious ceremonies in Ballygobackwards and the like. It ignored tens of thousands on Dublin streets participating in a colourful parade.



Limerick Soviet Banner Carried on April 2016 Commemoration of the Irish 1916 Easter Rising

The weather did not stop the people of Derry as thousands took part in the March for Justice on the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday.

British Army Paratroopers shot dead 13 and wounded 14 civilians during a civil rights march on Sunday, January 30, 1972. A 14th person died later from his injuries.
People from all over the island and beyond took to the streets of Derry, leaving Creggan at 2:15 this afternoon and marching peacefully through the streets of Derry finishing at Free Derry Corner.
The route retraces the original route of the civil rights march 50 years ago in 1972. Many held signs demanding justice from the British Government for those who lost their lives.
When the crowds returned to the Bogside, there was a rally at Free Derry corner with Bernadette McAliskey, née Devlin, and well-known civil rights campaigner Eamonn McCann among the speakers.

Irish civil rights leader, Bernadette Devlin McAliskey, gave a powerful speech to the crowd, "People walk this road every year, there has to be another generation of people, like the young people here," she said.

"I'm so glad to see so many young faces here. One thing that is certain, Bloody Sunday will never be forgotten.

"Again, as we have done every year, reminding people that Bloody Sunday was not just about the people who were killed, not just about the city and it was not just the first of many killings that broke our hearts for thirty years, this was different.

"This was a day when the British Government policy which had started weeks and months before, came to fruition on the street.

"Internment was introduced to try and break the people. They have responded with more marches and strikes. People tend to forget history, but nowhere in the six counties has forgotten.

"It was that kind of mass action that the British Government was afraid of. They were afraid of the marches as a result.

"It is the same today, what they are afraid of is this here. They are not afraid of the lone gunman, they are not afraid of the sniper, they are not afraid of the secret army. They can infiltrate, they recruit agents out of them.

"What they are afraid of is this here. Masses of people who won't quit. People who will tell their children and their grandchildren.

"If I don't see the British Government in the dock, my children, my grandchildren, my great-grandchildren will see them in it some day."

https://www.derrynow.com/news/derry-news/732173/one-thing-that-is-certain-bloody-sunday-will-never-be-forgotten.html?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=facebook&fbclid=IwAR0IYJ29T5Ft62ic8HG6lViFyLgjN6Bh2szGupNNu0feG-J4t6KDtg2QrLY







The establishment media has not said too much about a general strike which swept across Ireland because of Derry's Bloody Sunday – resulting in the burning 🔥 *of Dublin's British Embassy on Wednesday February 2 1972. Listen to a fascinating account by historian Brian Hanly here : https://www.leftarchive.ie/podcast/35-bloody-sunday-reactions-in-the-republic-of-ireland/?fbclid=IwAR2Z1LOUr9K5oSTq3iYaDfsEpJLGazkTCSawrRssOHyXy8B1OqA7gq6hxXo*

In summary, let us record : In 1972 the Dublin Government caught up with the public mood across Ireland and declared a "National Day of Mourning" on the day of the funeral for the 13 civilians murdered by the British Army Paratroop Regiment on Derry's Bloody Sunday. A general strike swept across Ireland, giving a mandate to people on a huge march – Called by the Dublin Council of Trade Unions – who burned the British Embassy to ashes. Wednesday February 2 1972 – A day to be proud of a Risen People in Dublin.

John Meehan January 30 2022

Bernadette Devlin delivers a proletarian protest on Monday 31 January 1972

[Bernadette Devlin delivers a proletarian protest (31/01/1972) – YouTube]



Bernadette Devlin delivers a proletarian protest (31/01/1972)

Bernadette Devlin McAliskey won two parliamentary elections in Mid-Ulster as “Unity” and an Independent Socialist. She took her seat in the House of Commons, unlike the abstentionist wing of the Republican Movement, and used it as a platform across the British Isles to stand up for workers’ rights. She lost her seat in 1974 when the Social Democratic & Labour Party stood against her and handed the seat to a conservative Unionist. She survived an assassination attempt by loyalist paramilitaries. Bernadette went on to stand in Dublin for the Irish Parliament (Dáil Éireann) as a candidate of the Irish section of the Fourth International and she still speaks at revolutionary socialist meetings to this day – here is her speech on the 100th anniversary of the Irish Easter Rising to a meeting of British Fourth International supporters in 2016 in London: https://youtu.be/J9QCArSU3-g