

An Phoblacht

REPUBLICAN NEWS



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H-BLOCK WARNING

LAST WEEK was, for many people, first tense and then confused. And finally it was a week which saw all of Ireland unite in breathing one mighty sigh of relief.

The British government, publicly intransigent to the demands of the hunger-strikers, but faced with their determination, was forced to meet — in the words of the blanket men — “the requirements of our five basic demands.”

But there must be no complacency. The danger still exists that these gains, essentially won through the courage of the H-Block and Armagh prisoners, could still be eroded through irresponsible and inflexible action by the British government. The nationalist people, the real guarantors of any settlement, must remain alert and vigilant.

ABANDON

The British government — which initiated four-and-a-half years ago, an intense and widely publicised policy of ‘criminalisation’ — was finally pushed, on Thursday 18th December, to abandon their policy.

By the handing over of the Atkins proposals (the thirty-four page document and accompanying statement) to the seven H-Block hunger-strikers and to the blanket men’s O/C, the British government gave the protesting prisoners the political recognition which they and ever-increasing sections of the Irish people have demanded.

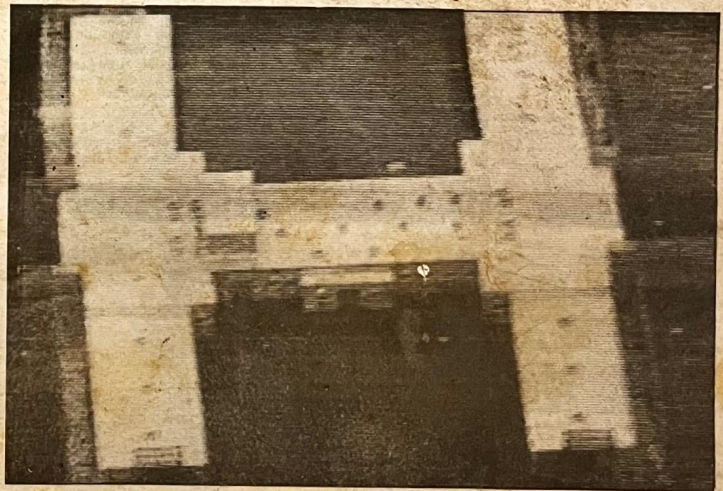
Gone was the empty propaganda line of ‘god-fathers, mafia, bandit-country, terrorists and criminal conspiracy.’ Gone were the hard

words of Thatcher, Atkins and their cohorts about ‘if they die, they die, we will not concede.’

UNPRECEDENTED

For fifty-three days, the seven H-Block hunger-strikers — together with their three comrades in Armagh jail for nineteen days, and joined later by thirty other blanket men — have maintained an unprecedented unity and unsurpassed determination in the face of tremendous pressures. In that fifty-three days, as one seasonal campaigner for legal justice, Fr. Denis Faul, has stated: “The world learned more about Castlereagh, Diplock courts, forced confessions, about the whole rotten British system, than we have been able to put across in the last nine years.”

Mealy-mouthed prison reformers, who excused themselves from the campaign in support of the political prisoners’ demands on the grounds that such demands were elitist, have been shown up for the moral cowards that they are. Not only were the demands not elitist but once again it has been proved that demands won by republican prison-



LONG KESH H-BLOCK: By handing over the Atkins proposals to the seven H-Block hunger-strikers and to the blanket men’s O/C, the British government gave the protesting prisoners political recognition

ers invariably better the lot of ordinary prisoners. Indeed, prison reform in the six-counties has, in the history of the Northern state, only been won by the efforts of political prisoners.

Now, as the British government

commences unravelling the H-Block /Armagh mess, prisoners’ relatives in particular await with some anxiety and confusion the outcome of last week’s victory. But the relatives should feel assured, that when the British government

affords the H-Block blanket men and Armagh women prisoners the opportunity to make ‘a positive response’, their patience and for-

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H-BLOCK WARNING

(CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE)

titude will be rewarded.

In the meantime, relatives should not, again in the words of the prisoners, "send any clothes or parcels to the prison until requested to do so by the republican PROs in each H-Block."

The hope of the prisoners' families that the issue could have been resolved before Christmas is understandable. But that it may take longer given the perfidious nature of British politicians and their prison officials, is understandable also.

What is certain (with all indications positively suggesting that the 'blanket, no-wash' protest will end soon, and with the prisoners and their supporters alert and ready, should any breakdown occur) is that the nationalist people can enter 1981, confident in the knowledge that one of the most reactionary governments in Western Europe was forced — faced by disciplined, principled and courageous protest — to bend to the will of an unbroken people.

Nothing then is impossible. Beir bua. Onward to 1981.

GREETINGS

In a supplied statement, issued through the Irish Republican Publicity Bureau in Dublin, and signed by P. O'Neill, the leadership of the Republican Movement has extended Christmas greetings to republicans and supporters everywhere, especially the prisoners.

The full text of the statement reads:

"The leadership of the Republican Movement extends Christmas greetings to friends and supporters everywhere, to Volunteers and political activists in the field, and to republican political prisoners in jails in Ireland, England and America. We send best wishes to the forty republican hunger-strikers and to all victims and opponents of British imperialism. We send best wishes especially to Sean McKenna, and trust that he will recover speedily to good health."

"In particular, we extend fraternal greetings to the families of prisoners, and to those who have campaigned so vigorously on the prisoners' behalf, especially during the recent successful hunger-strike."

"The brave women in Armagh, and men in the H-Blocks of Long Kesh, know that — because of their determination, courage and patience — the British government must, in the days and weeks ahead, move towards the ending of the 'blanket, no-wash' protest, or else stand condemned throughout the world."

"With the abandonment of their ill-fated 'criminalisation' policy, the British government have now only to unravel the mess they created in Armagh and Long Kesh."

"The masses who support the political prisoners have asserted that they will remain alert and vigilant during the transitional period. In this way the substantial gains made by the prisoners will be guaranteed, and all involved, especially the prisoners and their families, will be spared the more extreme effects of the obscenities of Armagh and Long Kesh."

"British imperialism, the real obscenity and the cause of suffering both inside and outside the prisons, still remains. Resistance to that imperialism, the cause of our social and political evils, will not lessen in the year ahead."

"In the meantime, we trust that all those who are oppressed, and those who resist such oppression, will enjoy the Christmas festival. Nollag shona daolbh. Beir bua."

Sean McKenna still seriously ill

ON the final day of their fifty-three day long fast, one of the seven H-Block hunger-strikers was semi-comatose in a terminal stage of starvation.

Last Thursday, December 18th, doctors reckoned that twenty-six-year-old Sean McKenna of Newry would have lasted only another twenty-four hours without food and medication. And his seriously ill condition continued to give grave cause for concern for several days after the ending of the hunger-strike on that day.

Sean was given the last rites by one of the Long Kesh prison chaplains on the Thursday, and was later transferred from the prison hospital to the military wing of Musgrave Park hospital in Belfast.

During Friday, in an effort by doctors to restore Sean's health, he was given injections, but could not take solids. Despite fears that damage to his eye-sight could be permanent, after visiting him that day in Musgrave Park hospital Sean's mother reported that he was connected to a heart machine and a drip, that it was hoped that his

sight could be saved, and that his morale was excellent.

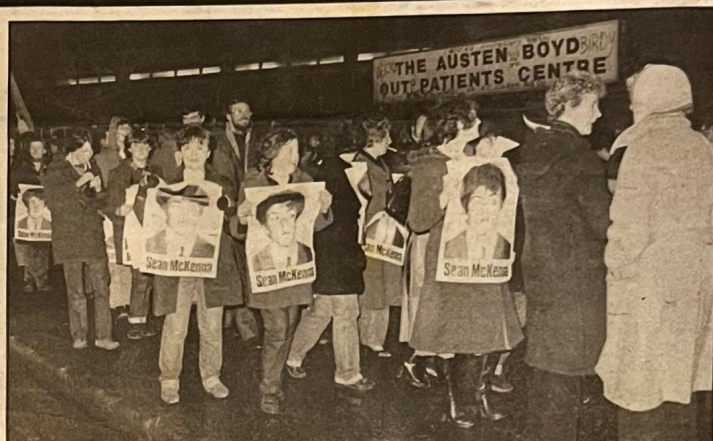
On Friday evening, Sean was transferred, under heavy military and RUC guard, to the intensive care unit of the Royal Victoria Hospital on the Falls Road. Shortly afterwards, a large well-wishing crowd of hunger-strike supporters, waving a tri-colour and holding aloft posters

bearing photographs of the seven hunger-strikers, gathered outside the hospital.

Meanwhile the other six long-term hunger-strikers — Leo Greene, Brendan Hughes, Raymond McCartney, Tommy McKearney, Tom McFeely and John Nixon — had first taken food on Thursday evening after their fast ended, and on Friday morning ate

scrambled eggs for breakfast.

The remaining thirty blanket men, who had joined the hunger-strike at the beginning of the week, ate a normal prison breakfast; whilst the three women protestors in Armagh jail — Mary Doyle, Mairead Farrell, and Mairead Nugent — after nineteen days on hunger-strike, had tea and toast.



Well-wishers gather outside the Royal Victoria Hospital on Belfast's Falls Road, shortly after hunger-striker Sean McKenna was transferred to the intensive care unit there

BY
B. SLOANE

Victims of UDR brutality

FOUR YOUNG men and women from Belfast's Markets district were subjected to a terrifying midnight ordeal in the grounds of Girdwood military barracks last Friday, December 19th, when UDR men in a drunken rage and apparently incensed at the hunger-strike settlement, beat them repeatedly with rifle butts.

James Mullan, aged 22, John O'Reilly, aged 20, Agnes Catney, aged 21, and Cathy Devlin, aged 19, were heading home through the city centre, when — in Cornmarket — they were pounced upon by a squad of UDR men, who had apparently recognised them as H-Block campaigners.

An angry exchange took place over the issue of the hunger-strike (ended the previous evening), with one UDR soldier shouting "You got what you wanted, you dirty bastards," whilst others man-handled their young victims into a jeep parked nearby, telling them they had 'no fucking rights'.

Once in Girdwood barracks, the four captives — instead of being taken to the normal reception area — were kept in the darkened car park, where they were forced up against the interior perimeter wall and attacked. Amid screams of 'fucking bastards' the four were attacked by the UDR soldiers, who clubbed the two men to the ground and opened up a gash on Agnes Catney's head with a blow from a rifle butt,

Cathy Devlin fortunately escaping injury.

Both men were repeatedly kicked and beaten as they lay helpless on the ground and were saved from further injury only by the intervention of an officer who emerged from an outbuilding.

There was little reason for relief, however, when the four eventually arrived at Musgrave Street RUC barracks, for the desk sergeant greeted them by saying: "You are nothing but no

good sluts, I have known you for years," whilst in the background the UDR men jeered, and shouted, amongst other things, "We'll wipe you all out."

As if to endorse this, a plain-clothes RUC man, armed with a bottle of vodka and a bottle of lemonade, had to be ushered from the room when he took a swing at them.

All four were later examined by an RUC doctor. He found that James Mullan had extensive

bruising to his back, shoulder and legs, consistent with having been beaten with a weapon; John O'Reilly had similar injuries to the body together with facial and genital swellings where he had been kicked. And Agnes Catney — who, earlier this month was seen by television viewers as she lay unconscious in Cromac Street, after an RUC attack following an H-Block/Armagh march — was once again despatched to hospital for treatment to a head wound.



From left to right: John O'Reilly, Agnes Catney, and James Mullan — beaten by UDR soldiers

CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE

High court protection for RUC torturers as much-delayed tribunal collapses in farce

BY PETER HAYES

THE FARCICAL COLLAPSE of the first-ever RUC police authority tribunal into torture, followed what can certainly be described as 'a conspiracy of silence' within the RUC, a familiar phrase first used ten years ago (by then RUC chief constable Sir Arthur Young!) to describe the attitude of RUC men at that time during a Scotland Yard enquiry into their killing of Derry man Samuel Devenny.

After delays of many months, and following repeated RUC obstruction tactics, the tribunal into the brutalising of twenty-eight-year-old James Rafferty of Aughnagar, Cappagh, Dungannon at Omagh barracks between November 11th and 13th 1976, collapsed on Monday because of lack of evidence forthcoming from the RUC themselves — protected by the High Court in Belfast.

The whole proceedings (overshadowed in the Northern media by the H-Block/Armagh hunger-strike and almost ignored by the Southern media) provide a sharp illustration of RUC interrogation 'malpractices', and of complicity in their cover-up by the Northern judiciary and the Director of Public Prosecutions.

The Rafferty tribunal — championed by former RUC police authority man and Dungannon independent councillor Jack Hassard — got underway on Monday 8th December at Hillsborough, near Belfast. The three-man tribunal consisted of its chairman, Peter Gibson QC, and two British police chief constables, J. H. Brownlow of South Yorkshire and A. D. Petrie of Strathclyde.

OPENING

Two weeks ago on Monday, the tribunal's opening day, James Rafferty described his three-day-long mistreatment at the hands of the RUC: this included being repeatedly punched and slapped; being made to take up particular positions for prolonged periods; and being made to do constant press-ups and maintain spread-eagled positions.

He said, for example, that he was made to perform fifty step-ups on a chair, then ordered to do fifty more. Also, he was pulled to his feet by the hair and on another occasion ordered to run on the spot.

During cross-examination by the RUC's barrister, James Rafferty exercised his right — confirmed by the tribunal chairman — to refuse to answer a question concerning his republican involvement. The RUC's barrister then used this refusal as an excuse to walk out of the tribunal. The chairman, however, stated that the tribunal would carry on regardless — at least for the time being — and during the evening secured High Court writs of subpoena requiring the attendance of twenty-nine



SIR ARTHUR YOUNG
— former RUC chief constable

RUC men from Omagh barracks at the tribunal.

On Tuesday, the tribunal's second day, a doctor stated that extensive bruising on James Rafferty's body could not have been self-inflicted. Called to Omagh barracks on November 13th 1976, the doctor thought that Rafferty should have immediate treatment and should be admitted to hospital. (In fact, shortly after midnight, on the morning of November 14th, Rafferty was taken by the RUC to Tyrone County Hospital in Omagh.)

INCRIMINATE

On Wednesday, the third day of the tribunal, the RUC's counsel argued that further RUC witnesses could incriminate themselves by appearing at the tribunal. He claimed that the appearances could enable Rafferty to identify them, which could lead to their possible prosecution for assault, and therefore he was applying to the High Court to have the subpoenas on the RUC men set aside.

This claim, regarding Rafferty identifying his torturers, was doubly ludicrous: firstly, it forms an obvious general admission of guilt, and secondly Rafferty has already identified the guilty men, as was confirmed on the tribunal's next (and fourth) sitting, the following Monday, December 15th.

Then, a senior RUC man admitted that RUC interrogators must have assaulted James Rafferty, and that injuries incurred by him at the time of his interrogation could not have been self-inflicted. The RUC man now a superintendent, and then a chief inspector when he conducted an internal RUC enquiry amongst

Rafferty's interrogators — told the tribunal that descriptions provided by Rafferty through his solicitor appeared to pin-point certain RUC men as being responsible for the injuries.

A file containing the results of his investigations had been passed on to the DPP more than three years ago — in 1977 — but as yet, he stated, no direction to prosecute had been given on it. Rafferty's counsel said, cross-examining the superintendent: "In 1977, the DPP had got two statements — from Mr. Rafferty alleging ill-treatment, medical evidence substantiating these statements, and statements from you indicating the results of your investigations. Therefore the DPP has had for the last three years all those items that show ascertainable individuals were guilty of assault. And the DPP has sat on them as far as we know for the last three years. Do you know of any reason why there has not been a prosecution?" The RUC superintendent replied that he could not answer that question.

QUASHING

The next day, Tuesday 16th December, judgement was postponed in the High Court, on an RUC appeal against the validity of the subpoenas forcing twenty-nine RUC witnesses to appear at the tribunal — which itself was therefore adjourned.

Three days later, last Friday, December 19th, the High Court judge delivered his judgement, quashing subpoenas ordering the attendance of RUC witnesses at the tribunal, after stating that the tribunal was a non-judicial body.

Last Monday the tribunal resumed, only to be wound up because there were no other witnesses — the guilty RUC men having opted out.

Coincidentally, last weekend, an article in the 'Sunday World' confirmed the existence of an RUC club, institutionalising and glamourising RUC brutality. Membership of the '17/2' club (named after the form RUC men fill in when a complaint is lodged against them) is apparently conditional upon an RUC man being investigated thirty-four times.

Members have their own distinctive club tie, meet regularly for drinks and exchange tales of precisely how they brutalised their particular string of victims. Members from Omagh barracks will currently be celebrating the demise of the Rafferty tribunal.

WARDERS WADE IN

RELIABLE REPORTS filtering out of Crumlin Road jail in Belfast reveal that last Friday night, December 19th, prison warders dressed in riot gear dragged republican remand prisoners in 'C' wing from their cells beating several of them viciously. Several prisoners were put in the punishment block, and in 'C' wing the contents of some cells were thrown onto the landing.

The attacks stemmed from a complaint made to a prison warder by one prisoner, Joe Simpson of Belfast, about the cold dinner served on Thursday night, and when the warder told Joe to 'fuck off', words were exchanged. The following morning, Joe was placed on the boards for 'insubordination' and when the prisoners' O/C went to investigate, the prison warder in charge refused to talk to him. Consequently, a general door-banging protest took place in the evening in protest against Joe's punishment and the refusal to meet the O/C, and it was soon after this that riot-clad warders waded in.

Clumsy operation

SCOTLAND YARD'S annual Christmas pantomime, which involves attempting to incite the populace of the city of London into a fever pitch of anti-Irish hysteria, was in full swing last week. This year the show is misnamed 'Operation Dainty'. The police have been mounting a spectacularly unsuccessful man-hunt in London for Brighton jail escapee Gerard Tuite, who has so far eluded their despairing clutches despite an unprecedented show of publicity — involving video screens in twenty-five public places, sixteen thousand posters, and massive media coverage, including television news cameras inside prowling police cars.

At Christmas time, two years ago, the police-produced pantomime was named Operation Santa and featured (reluctantly) a Belfast republican known as 'the Bald Eagle', plus a white Opel car. A certain over-imaginative Detective Constable Edward Morley purported to have cornered the car, and later dramatically reenacted the scene for eager television camera crews. While 'the Bald Eagle' still safely resides in Andersonstown, D/C Morley was subsequently retired from the police suffering from 'ill-health'.

Plans scrapped

BRITISH MINISTRY OF DEFENCE plans to build a £20 million army base at Mahon Road in Portadown have been scrapped, because, so they claim, all cut-backs in state expenditure rather than a cut-back in military commitment to occupying the six counties. Defence Minister Barney Hayhoe told Westminster last Friday, December 19th, that the Brits are 'still committed to stationing a sixth resident battalion in Northern Ireland. We have been looking for ways in which we can do this more economically than at Portadown.'

Paisley clash

BRITISH PREMIER Margaret Thatcher and loyalist leader Ian Paisley had a major row last Friday, December 19th, over the outcome of the recent Thatcher/Haughhey summit meeting in Dublin. Paisley, worried by both the Dublin summit and the hunger-strike settlement (the previous day), and anxious to show his most ardent supporters that he has lost none of his Orange appetite, came into sharp conflict with Margaret Thatcher during a thirty-five minute meeting at her office in the British House of Commons. Afterwards Paisley was only too eager to tell the press of how he had pressurised her.

Paisley went to protest about the Dublin summit communiqué, which he said had put everything concerning the North on the table. As well, he wanted to press home his recently-emphasised point that if the British government are contemplating a change in the North's constitutional position, the people of Britain should be consulted about it, in a referendum. Instead of having the customary conversation, Paisley proceeded to read a lengthy statement of his views, stressing his suspicions about the undermining of the constitutional guarantee. He told journalists later: "I commenced to read the statement, only to be interrupted at almost every paragraph with Mrs. Thatcher saying 'I stand by the guarantee'." She then got 'very strong' about it, and hit the side of her chair as he repeated "that she stood by the guarantee," he said.

Poll majority

AN OPINION POLL in Britain has shown a large majority in favour of ending the union with the North. The survey, for the 'Sunday Times' newspaper, followed loyalist leader Ian Paisley's suggestion that if the British government intend to change the North's constitutional position, then there should be a referendum in Britain. After adjustments taking account of 'don't knows' and abstainers, the poll produced a finding of 63% against the union and 37% for it.

The results came from the replies of 1,071 representative adults in a survey by Market and Opinion Research International last week. They were asked which way they would vote if there was a referendum on whether or not the North should remain part of the 'United Kingdom'. Before the adjustments were made, 50% said they would vote for it not to remain so, while 29% favoured it remaining so and a further 21% were undecided or would abstain. Paisley, despite the results of the poll (or, perhaps, because of them, given that he fancies his chances of being the first prime minister of an 'independent' six-county state), is sticking with his case for such a referendum.

De Lorean delight

JOHN DE LOREAN, the American car man and con-man, who relieved the unsuspecting British tax-payer (with the assistance of then Northern direct-ruler Roy Mason) of more than fifty million pounds, two years ago, to build a factory in West Belfast, was delighted to announce on Wednesday 17th December that the Bank of America has agreed a £13 million line of credit to help him finance shipment of cars to the United States, where he claims they will be sold from the beginning of April, (production being due to commence in February).

John De Lorean who shows outstanding skill at pocketing millions of the people's money, has still to show that he can produce a car. Informed speculation is that the bulk of his original car design — dubbed a 'white elephant' at the time — has now been scrapped, in favour of a Lotus-designed model; and that the car — if it gets that far — will go on the market at more than half again of its originally-projected selling price.

Derry commemoration

SEVERAL HUNDRED people attended the annual commemoration last Sunday afternoon, December 21st, to the graves of County Derry IRA Volunteers Martin Lee, John Bateson and Jim Sheridan, killed on December 18th 1971. The parade, preceded by a colour party, marched from Ballymaguigan to the New Bridge cemetery. Two bands took part, and there were fourteen banners of Sinn Féin Cumann from South Derry and South West Antrim. Veteran republican Kevin Agnew presided at the graveside, and Mary McDermott of Belfast Sinn Féin delivered the oration in which she stressed the importance of such ceremonies in maintaining the spirit of republicanism, especially through the bad times. She urged those present to carry on and re-double their efforts to bring to fruition the aims for which Volunteers Lee, Bateson, Sheridan, and all republican martyrs have died: a thirty-two-county socialist republic.

Who benefits from inflation?

BY KATHLEEN DWYER

LAST WEEK the Central Statistics Office in Dublin announced that current inflation rates in the Free State are over 18%. Prices over the last five years have just about doubled, and as usual the prices which have risen the fastest are those of basic essentials, food, clothing, heating and energy.

Inflation rates of between 15% and 20% which have prevailed in the US and many EEC countries over the past five years are unprecedented on such a world-wide scale. They have been associated previously with the collapse of an economy, such as in Germany between the wars, or as an occupational hazard of the banana republic economies of South America.

Moreover the current rates appear quite uncontrollable. Despite the stated firm efforts of Western governments, they have shown no sign of knowing how to control it. Over a year of recession has made no difference to inflation and initial forecasts for the Free State next year are 16%. In contrast, states which are broadly categorised as socialist do not have inflation at all.

CAUGHT

Unending price rises cause untold hardship and as always it is the wage earners, the retired, the people on social assistance, or on small fixed incomes, who are caught worst. The wealthy property owner or those in positions to borrow large sums of money have no problems. If you borrow £100, an inflation rate of 20% gives you a £20 bonus.

Inflation first and foremost provides a way of cutting wages and with little danger of much fuss. The Free State 'national understanding' gave a 15% increase in wages over a fifteen month period, way below current rates and future predictions.

Wage cuts by this method are much easier to put over than a direct cut. Even those supposedly enjoying index-linked wages do not keep up, because the index of price increases includes all types of luxury goods, whereas the poorer people spend all of their income on the faster-rising basic needs. And the wage earner, although told that he is getting the same as before whilst receiving a cut in real wages, also races up the tax brackets to have more taken off him.

CAUSE

In spite of this, governments will maintain that the cause of inflation is wage increases — greedy workers demanding more. Or they offer such trite explanations of inflation as 'too much money chasing too few goods', when the obvious problem is people's lack of money to get the goods they really need. In fact the opposite is the case with shops going out of business through trying to finance large stocks of unsold goods.

Oil prices are another candidate for blame, but oil prices to the producer have not risen as fast as inflation and the Western capitalist governments in conjunction with the giant oil companies control the oil markets. Indeed if inflation was the result of foreign prices then it could be easily corrected by adjusting exchange rates, presupposing that a people are able to control their own economy — which the Irish people are not, the whole of the country being integrated into the Western capitalist economy.

CONTRARY

In the Free State, the falling value of the punt in relation to sterling means that prices of that large proportion of goods bought from Britain are higher, and that much cheaper for people in Britain to buy Irish. Contrary to what we are always told, this is far from being a good thing, simply meaning that the British can buy what those in the Free State produce, for less money. Equally, property and industries in the twenty-six counties are that much cheaper to them.

However, it is highly questionable whether the Free State government in fact wishes to control inflation. Its strategy to escape recession and massive foreign debt depends on attracting foreign investors, and a pre-requisite is low wages and high prices — provided by inflation.

Socialist economies prove that both prices and wages can be fixed



'Poorer people spend all of their income on faster-rising basic needs'

and controlled by government. But an economy which remains capitalist depends on the success of the owners of industry to make profit,

to expand production, to make more profit. Inflation works to provide the conditions which bring this about.

Circus arrival not funny

BY ASHY McDERMOTT

DUBLINERS, over the last few weeks, cannot have failed to notice the large colourful posters plastered throughout the city announcing the arrival of Hoffman's Circus for the Christmas period. But this seemingly innocent and attractive addition to Christmas entertainment has posed a major threat to the four Irish circus families, who have reacted strongly.

Ireland's four remaining circuses are all well known names throughout the country — Courtney's, Duffy's, Fossett's and Tom Duffy's. Together they represent the remaining tradition of centuries of Irish touring showmen who over the years brought entertainment to cities, towns and villages, from one man shows, to magic lanterns and fit-ups. A tradition which has endured through national, economic and political difficulties.

The Irish families have written to the

Hoffman headquarters in England, (despite its claim to be a West German circus, it is in fact British-based), and have issued a press statement strongly outlining their opposition to the visit.

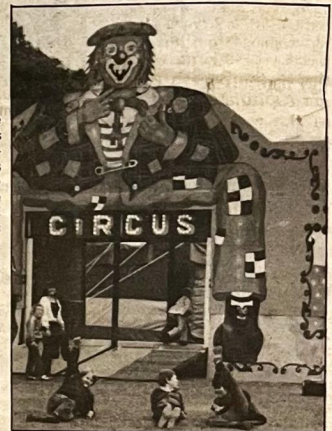
The Irish circuses are hard-pressed financially and are in danger of demise. Despite their unique and widely appreciated art form, the circuses receive no form of state aid or subsidy through such bodies as the arts council, which are available to other more restricted entertainments. In addition they are subjected to all the rigours of VAT, excise duties and other taxes, they point out.

Support for the Irish circuses is based on a population of four-and-a-half million, as opposed to fifty-three million in Britain. Contrasting the prices charged for admission, the Irish circuses point out that where Hoffman's are charging from £1 to £4, they charge only from 50p to £1.75, and add that there is no type of act on offer which has

not been seen here with the Irish circuses.

In addition, the British circuses, because of indoor facilities, can tour for nine months with the possibility of television or other indoor appearances in winter. The Irish circus families are forced to remain idle for five months. And in a grim reminder of the threat, they point out that in the late fifties and early sixties, the visits of Chipperfields and Bertram Mills circuses from England brought the demise of two Irish circuses, again names that will be remembered, John Duffy and Sons and Kayes Brothers.

Certainly an already hard-pressed entertainment looks dangerously threatened. An entertainment which brings simple enjoyment to thousands. An imaginative move would be the establishment of a state circus to guarantee the future of an art form which may often be taken for granted by those who enjoy it the most. It is certainly worth thinking about.



FOSSETT'S CIRCUS

ALTANNA SPÉISIÚLA I ROSC

Tá Rosc ar fáil arís agus fáiltíom roimhe. Mar is gnáth tá sé lán d'altanna spéisiúla agus is móir is fiú é a léamh. 'Sé an rud is fearr mar gheall air ná is bhfuil eolas ann nach bhfuil léi fáil ó thoinní eile.

Léiríonn an t-eagrán seo fírinneach Fhianna Fáil agus fírinneach an Stáit Chórais go ginearálta i leith na Gaeilge. Tá scéala san eagrán seo mar gheall ar na Gaeilcoileanna, postáirí Fhianna Fáil, Aer Rianta, Oifig an Phoist, Príosún Phort Laoise, na Gardaí, RTE, Late Late Show agus Assimilation ó thaobh na Gaeilge do.

'Sé príomhchóir an eagrán seo ná an bac atá á chur ar ghaeilcoileanna a fhorbairt agus a bhunú. Dúirt Míchéal Ó Muircheartaigh, Cathaoirleach na nGaeilcoileanna go bhfuil Roinn Oideachais na Sé Chontae Fíchead agus Oifig na n-Oibreacha Poiblí ag obair le chéile chun téachaint chuige go raibh an

meid airgid atá á chaitheamh ar oideachas trí mhéad na Gaeilge chomh híseal agus is féidir.

Dódh síos Módh Scoil Luimní, trí bhliain ó shin, agus cé gur gheall an t-Aire dhá bhliain ó shin go ndéanfaí an scoil a ath-thógaint gan mhóilín ní an obair tosaíthe foill. Tá Gaeilcoil Inse Chóir fós gan láithreán agus tá bacannaf a chur i mbealach an Gaeilcoileanna i mBré agus i mBlanchardstown.

RANNÓG CHEARTA

I suirbhé an Rannóg Chearta taispeántar an tslí ina bhfuil an ghaeilge á mhású. 'Sé Aer Rianta comhlucht Stáit is measa ó thaobh an maslú seo. Tá an dealramh ar

chúrsaí go bhfuil sé mar pholasáí acu an Ghaeilge a fhágáil ar lár má tá fógra tábhachtach le cur suas acu agus mí-chruinneas Gaeilge a úsáid má tá siad ag baint úsáid as an teanga, m. sh. "Bear" (Bar), LEITHRIS NA FIR' ETC.

Tá litir curtha ag an gConradh chuid Aire 'Dil' na Sé Chontae Fíchead chun a fháil amach cén fáth nach bhfuil gealltanas a thug sé don Chonradh á chomhlíonadh ag údaráis Phríosún Phort Laoise a thuilleadh. Tá sé faighte amach ag an gConradh go bhfuil údaráis an phríosúin ag dul siar ar an ngeallúint sin.

LATE LATE SHOW

Tá Seán Mac Mathúna, Ard Runaí Chonradh na Gaeilge tar éis scríobh go dtí G.T. Waters ag gearán mar gheall ar an ndrochshlí

inar chaith Gay Byrne le Gwynfor Evans an Late Late Show le déanaí. Léiritear san alt an tslí inar úsáid Gay Byrne an clár le cur i gcoinne na gaeilge.

Tá alt mar gheall ar an bhfaisean atá ann faoi láthair go gcuireann togáilthe, ainmneacha Sasanaigh ar na heastáit iur. Ar na samplaí atá luaite tá Westminster Lawns, Torquay Wood, Wellington House, agus Grosvenor House.

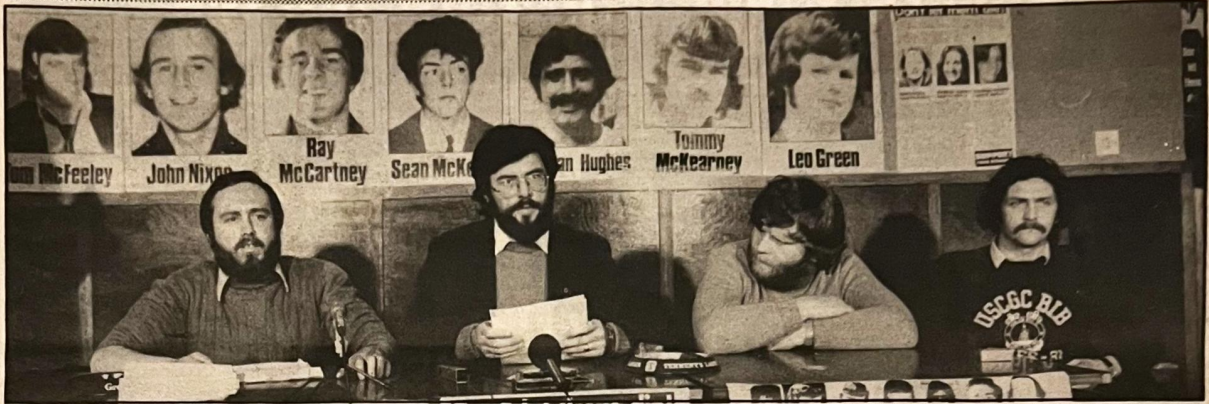
Tá litreacha as na Blocanna H i gcló chomh aith agus ta alt dar teideal 'Britain Must Concede' i gcló chomh maith. Bhí Conradh na Gaeilge lán taobh thiar de na fir pluid agus siad tacaíocht do na mairseáil ar son na stailceoirí ocras.

In agallamh le Gwynfor Evans deir sé "A greater emphasis on Irish will be necessary if this country is to be saved from this mediocre, dull

LE TOMAS O SE



provincialism" Tá a lán altanna spéisiúla eile i gcló chomh maith agus is móir is fiú é a cheannach. Rosc — Irish Dhatheangach Chonradh na Gaeilge. 20p a luach.



Republican spokesmen at a Belfast press conference, the day after the hunger-strike ended were: Danny Morrison, Sinn Féin Publicity Director and 'An Phoblacht/Republican News' editor; Gerry Adams, Sinn Féin vice-president; and former blanket men — Kieran Nugent and Joe Maguire

CRISIS RESOLVED

But vigilance now needed

BY PETER ARNLIS

AS THE H-Block hunger-strike reached crisis point last Thursday, December 18th, with one of the seven men, Sean McKenna, being on the verge of death, the British administration capitulated and presented to the men and the blanket men's O/C, Bobby Sands, a new thirty-four page document (which is the basis for the settlement) plus a statement that direct-ruler Humphrey Atkins had been due to make that afternoon, but which he had suddenly postponed.

In the days leading up to Thursday there had been no concrete evidence of any movement whatsoever, but there had been various noises made by the Brits who were becoming increasingly uncomfortable that the generally, and internationally, perceived view of the situation was of a crisis being unnecessarily perpetuated by British inflexibility.

The previous Sunday, December 14th, a leading Tory back-bencher, Michael Mates, was at pains to emphasize on RTE radio that "there is precious little difference between what the hunger-strikers are seeking and what is on offer."

But the only offer made to the hunger-strikers in the last eight weeks, until last Thursday, had been a four-page statement which was read out by Atkins in Westminster on Thursday 4th December, and which was described in the Thatcher/Haughy communique on Monday 8th December as possibly being 'the basis' on which the issue could be resolved.

Two days after that Dublin summit, a very senior Northern Ireland Office civil servant, named by Paisley as a 'Mr. Bullcock', went into Long Kesh with the Atkins Westminster statement and read it out to the seven hunger-strikers.

However, he refused either to discuss or to accept, proposals put to him by hunger-striker Brendan Hughes, and the men immediately declared that they had no intention of abandoning their fast. The official departed and that was the last movement from the Brits.

OVERTURE

Then, early last Thursday, the British

made an overture, and it was communicated to the hunger-strikers that a more thorough document than Atkins' December 4th statement would be delivered to them. In that same day's edition of the *'Irish Press'* it was revealed that Cardinal O'Flaherty had been shown a secret document which he believed to contain the basis of a settlement: he thought it could end the strike, if the contents were fully explained to the men.

It was on Thursday evening that the hunger-strikers and the blanket men's O/C, Bobby Sands, were shown the detailed document which was not just an elaboration of what was previously on offer, but contained certain explanations which allowed the political prisoners to realise their five demands.

WORK

For example, although Atkins' December 4th statement said that "work is interpreted to include orderly duties, industrial employment, vocational training and education," the new document said that "work is not interpreted narrowly," and elaborated on educational courses which were available: "periods of study range from two to twenty hours a week, depending on the subject ... in addition self-study courses — with tutorial support as necessary — are provided."

Paragraph 11 states that "although for convenience the prison regime has been divided into two between the working day and 'free time', it is not possible, or desirable, to draw a rigid line in practice." If this is interpreted flexibly, along with the clause that "prisoners who have the benefit of study time during the day can also frequently make use of their leisure time to continue their studies," then it allows the Brits to get over the hurdle of the hours to be put in during work. The document also says: "if for any reason a prisoner, or group of prisoners cannot be employed on a particular day, they may be given extra PT, games or handicrafts/study-time instead."

In its conclusion the document states that "the picture is not a static one" and that: "This maintenance and development of a progressive regime reflects the government's commitment to run a humane and flexible system under the prison rules."

UNIFORM

With regard to the wearing of a prison uniform, Atkins' December 4th statement said that "it will be seen that a prisoner conforming with the rules may wear his own clothing for almost half the time he would expect to be outside his own cell."

The other half of the time — after the British government's eve of hunger-strike decision, on October 23rd, to offer prison-issue civilian clothing — such issue clothing would

have to be worn.

However, even after that October announcement there had been no rush by the Brits to abolish the denim uniform and striped shirts. But the thirty-four page document's accompanying statement (shown to the hunger-strikers the day before it was made by Atkins in Westminster) pointed out that, with the ending of the blanket protest, "denim prison uniform becomes a thing of the past." Thus the hunger-strikers had successfully neutralised the major symbol of criminalisation: the prison uniform.

The new document also emphasises that prisoners will be able to wear their own clothes three-quarters of the whole time. However, it is the other quarter of the time which continued British intransigence could turn into a stumbling block.

For if the Brits do not stick to the document's offer of self-study courses as an interpretation of work, and a form of work which certainly requires no prison-issue clothing then the ending of the blanket protest will be placed in jeopardy.

HALT

In ending their hunger-strike, the men explained on Thursday: "Having seen the statement to be announced by Humphrey Atkins in the British House of Commons tomorrow, and having been supplied with a document which contains a new elaboration on our five demands which were first enumerated upon by Humphrey Atkins to the House of Commons on December 4th, we decided to halt the hunger-strike."

"In ending our hunger-strike we make it clear that failure by the British government to act in a responsible manner towards ending the conditions which forced us onto a hunger-strike, will not only lead to inevitable and continual strife within the H-Blocks, but will show quite clearly the intransigence of the British government."

RESPONSE

Next day, Friday, the blanket men's O/C, Bobby Sands, announced that: "Dependent upon a responsible and sensible attitude from the British government in implementing their proposals, the blanket men will make a positive response. We are satisfied that the implementation of these proposals meets the requirements of our five basic demands. Republican prisoners will not be wearing any form of prison uniform and will not be participating in any form of penal work."

The blanket men saluted the seven long-term hunger-strikers and the three Armagh women prisoners — Mairead Farrell, Mairead Nugent and Mary Doyle — who came off their eighteen-day fast on Friday. But they cautioned the people — who they thanked for their tremendous support — to be on the

alert and to monitor the British government's implementation of the settlement.

BOASTED

The Brits boasted that they had been victorious, as did loyalist leader Ian Paisley — until he discovered that a new document had been delivered to the men and that the O/C, Bobby Sands, had been ferried from H3-Block to the prison hospital to meet the hunger-strikers, which was a major act of recognition of the political prisoners' command structure.

Thus the Brits' boasts of refusing to give in were subdued.

At first Atkins denied that any such document existed, then — admitting its existence — he said that it was no different to his December 4th Westminster statement, a claim which was nonsense: the document was thirty pages longer, and, in Cardinal O'Flaherty's words, it "allowed for a great amount of fleshing out, as well as being much fuller it is a much more positive document."

Ian Paisley, having heralded the end of the hunger-strike as a victory for British premier Thatcher, exploded when he heard about the new document: he said he was "seriously alarmed at what had taken place."

"It is like the Rhodesian settlement. Settle with them politically first — that was what was done in Dublin — and then deal with the terrorists and make concessions to them. They have done that. The people of Northern Ireland had better wake up to the fact that this government has sold them down the river."

CONCLUSION

Fr. Denis Faul, who visited the blanket men last Sunday, afterwards said on RTE radio: "Through the hunger-strike the prisoners won an immense amount of publicity which focussed on the Diplock courts and the Castlereagh brutality. As far as I am concerned I was very happy with that victory even though it was won at the terrible cost of a hunger-strike. For me that was the great victory."

And so, with the hunger-strike over, and with a new document from which to settle the men's five demands, the blanket protest could be speedily brought to a successful conclusion. The H-Block prisoners have said: "The speed at which the phasing out of the blanket protest proceeds is entirely dependent upon the sincerity and the manner in which the British government implement their proposals."

In the days ahead this victory must be copper-fastened by popular vigilance and pressure upon leading figures to observe that the British government introduce all the new reforms which have been won by long and arduous republican struggle.

HUNGER-STRIKE PROTESTS: IRELAND

South

LOUTH County Council became the latest local council to support the prisoners' five demands when a motion proposed by Sinn Féin councillor Fra Browne was passed on Monday 15th December.

On Thursday 18th December the increasing militancy of protests in Dublin, which had become apparent the previous day with occupations of Leinster House, RTE, British Airways and the *Irish Independent*, continued when students from UCD blocked Leeson Street Bridge.

The same afternoon trade unionists walked out from work to join a three hundred strong meeting which marched around the city lobbying the offices of the ATGWU, ITGWU and FWU. Roads were blocked at each point and the afternoon of protest brought city centre traffic to a standstill. Finally the workers marched to Leinster House where a picket was held.

On Friday 19th December, a protest march and meeting in Ballinamore, County Leitrim became a salute to the hunger-strikers. A parade through the town was followed by a rally which was addressed by Euro-MP Neil Blaney, Fermanagh teacher Bernard O'Connor, and Sinn Féin president Ruairi O'Bradaigh. The meeting was chaired by Francie Mulvey.

On Saturday 20th December a meeting in the centre of Dun Laoghaire, County Dublin was addressed by Rose Dugdale, Greta Fusco who has two



Greta Fusco — sister of two men in prison, speaking in Dun Laoghaire

brothers in prison, Osgr Breatnach of the National H-Block/Armagh Committee and John Major of the committee's trade union group.

The same day in Sligo a rally addressed by three hundred people in O'Connell Street, was chaired by P. J. Kearney of the local action group, and addressed by Sinn Féin president Ruairi O'Bradaigh, local councillors Declan Bree and Tommy Higgins, a relative of a Strabane 'blanket man', and Michael Cillireavy of the Sligo action group.

A meeting the same day in Clonmel, County Tipperary was addressed by local speakers, and other meetings took place in Cork city and Castleisland, County Kerry.

On Sunday 21st December, Ruairi O'Bradaigh addressed a meeting which followed a torchlight march in Belurbet, County Cavan.

North

H-BLOCK/ARMAGH protests in the North continued up until Thursday night when the hunger-strike concluded, and a series of solidarity rallies continued afterwards.

Protests in Belfast in the final days of the hunger strike included the blocking of Mountpottinger Road and Short Strand by one hundred local people on Wednesday afternoon, December 17th, and a torchlight procession around the Twinbrook estate that night by five hundred people. On Thursday 18th December one thousand people took part in a torchlight procession from Ardoyne to the neighbouring ghetto of the Bone.

In Derry city, protests included the blocking of Strand Road, Great James Street, Little James Street and William



H-Block march by trade unionists to Leinster House, on December 18th



Cathal Brugha band, Turf Lodge, leading part of Sunday's march in Belfast, along the Falls Road

Street by one hundred and fifty people between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. on Tuesday. The protest caused traffic chaos. A similar result was achieved by flying pickets in the city on Thursday evening when Great James Street and Clarendon Street were blocked.

In County Derry, a torchlight procession in Maghera on Wednesday night was supported by several thousand people as it made its way through two housing estates to a meeting in the town centre. The following night, thousands attended a torchlight march through the

town to the castle grounds of Dungiven which ended with a meeting addressed by former 'blanket man' Eunan Brolly.

In County Antrim, protests included the blocking of the main Belfast to Derry road between 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. on Wednesday at Toomebridge and at the same time on the following evening three hundred people blocked the centre of the town.

On Friday morning, following the conclusion of the hunger-strike, a solidarity march was held around Linadoun in Belfast, and later the same day, a

solidarity picket outside the Royal Victoria Hospital, where Sean McKenna was held, was attended by two hundred and fifty people who carried large photographs of him.

On Saturday, a rally in Enniskillen, County Fermanagh, was addressed by Euro-MP Neil Blaney, local councillor Pat McCaffrey, local teacher Bernard O'Connor and Westminster MP Frank Maguire.

In Dungannon on Sunday afternoon a demonstration of about eight hundred people was addressed by local speakers,

Jim McGivern, Francie Molloy, Mrs. Mullan and Martin McNulty. And in the Creggan area of Derry a several-hundred-strong march took place.

Also on Sunday, over a thousand people took part in a Belfast march and rally on the Falls Road from Dunville Park to the Busy Bee and were addressed by former 'blanket man' Kieran Nugent, former Armagh protest prisoner Maureen Gibson, and Sinn Féin vice-president Gerry Adams.

Extracts from Gerry Adams' speech are as follows:

"Today we come together to celebrate a number of victories, all inter-related but important also in their own right. That the British government were forced by the determination of the men and women in Armagh and H-Block to give them the political recognition that they and we claim they deserve, that the British government was forced to outline measures which the prisoners feel meet the requirements of their five demands, and finally, that this was achieved without loss of life of those involved.

"We cannot, however, having battled for so long both outside and inside the prison walls, afford to become complacent about how this issue is resolved. For years we have been saying that the British government, given a bit of common sense, could resolve the H-Block/Armagh issue. The political prisoners have clearly stated that dependent upon a sensible and responsible attitude from the British government on implementing their proposals, the 'blanket men' will make a positive response.

"The ball is now firmly in the British court but we, the people, the real guarantors must ensure that they proceed in a sensible manner, and must remain alert and vigilant, as must those in high office who have spoken out on the need for generosity and common sense. The prisoners have been generous even to the point of almost giving their own lives. Churchmen and politicians must now ensure that 'perfidious Albion' behaves in a manner which permits and builds on the conditions now existing to actually resolve the 'blanket/no-wash' protest.

"To permit the contrary is to permit Humphrey Atkins to behave in a vindictive fashion, and we and the prisoners know how vindictive their prison regime can be. Then the whole thing will become unstick.

"The message today is: 'be vigilant, be alert, be patient'. The weeks ahead are the most crucial since the 'blanket protest' began."

America

ON Saturday, December 20th, there were H-Block/Armagh victory demonstrations in ten cities across the United States.

The largest, in New York, where more than one thousand people demonstrated outside the British consulate, was attended by senior members of the Labour movement and black civil rights activist Amiri Baraka. It was addressed by Martin Galvin, Noraid, and former 'blanket man' Fra McCann, who was due to return to Ireland shortly, after an exhaustive (and exhausting!) five month tour of the United States.

Meanwhile H-Block campaign organizer, Belfast ruler Desi Mackin has received the date for his extradition hearing, which will take place in the third week of January.

Belgium

THE strength and frequency of pickets on the British embassy in Brussels led to a ban of all demonstrations of any kind in the city by its mayor. On Christmas Eve solidarity groups are planning a march from Antwerp to a nearby British army base to call for troops out of Ireland.

Britain

LONDON

ON Wednesday, December 17th, the National Executive Committee of the British Labour Party drafted an emergency resolution calling for an humanitarian solution to the prison crisis.

The same day several Labour MPs lodged a Westminster motion calling for prison reform in the six-counties on the basis of the five demands.

On Thursday, Labour MP Bob Parry, a supporter of the motion, appealed for an emergency discussion on the hunger-strike in Westminster, but this was rejected by the Speaker of the House of Commons. Also on Thursday a half-page advertisement headed 'Don't let Irish prisoners die' appeared in the influential political weekly, 'The New Statesman', paid for by many concerned people in Britain, and co-ordinated by 'Information on Ireland'.

On Friday morning, on 'hearing of the end of the H-Block/Armagh hunger-strike, British jail remand prisoner Maurice Ward of Dublin (who is not a republican) ended his solidarity fast.

On Saturday a rally was held in Kilburn Square at which all the solidarity groups were represented, and messages of solidarity to the H-Block and Armagh prisoners were read out.

GLASGOW

One thousand H-Block/Armagh supporters paraded through the streets of Glasgow on Saturday afternoon chanting 'Troops out — H-Block and Armagh'. Mounted police and hundreds of other policemen accompanied the march on its three mile route. At one point more than one hundred loyalists, wearing Union Jacks and chanting 'scum', unsuccessfully attempted to disrupt the parade.

Brittany

A MARCH through the centre of Brest in support of the hunger-strikers on Saturday 13th December attracted two hundred and fifty supporters.

Denmark

ON Wednesday 10th December the Venstre Socialist parliamentary group of six MPs raised the hunger-strike issue in the Danish parliament. The Danish Foreign Minister expressed deep concern at the situation.

On December 16th Venstre Socialisme issued a statement demanding that the British government immediately grant the prisoners' demands and accusing it of consistently lying about the situation.

The following day the co-ordinating committee of Danish dockers sent a message to Belfast dockers promising to act on a request from them to take industrial action against British ships.

Former blanket man Kieran Nugent and former Armagh protest prisoner Maureen Gibson arrived back in Ireland from Denmark on Thursday 18th December having completed a fifty-two day tour of six European countries.

Euzkadi

TELEGRAMS of protest were sent last week from four parliamentary parties in

HUNGER-STRIKE PROTESTS: ABROAD



Above: Part of an Ireland solidarity day at the University of De Harst in Driebergen, Holland. (Seated third from left is Dutch feminist journalist Els van Hout, who had an order excluding her from the six counties served on her in July of this year.)

the Basque county to British Queen Elizabeth. The parties were: PNV, the Socialist Party, EIA, and the Communist Party.

France

ON Wednesday 17th December, seven English-speaking journalists in Paris sent a letter to the British embassy in support of the hunger-strikers. The following day one hundred and fifty more journalists added their names to a similar letter.

On Friday 19th December, following the ending of the hunger-strike forty delegates from the Central Confederation of Workers' Unions called to the British embassy demanding that British troops should now be pulled out of Ireland.

On the same day the world conference of the OCI in Paris passed a motion saluting the battle of the hunger-strikers.

On Saturday 20th December a meeting close to the British embassy, organised by the French Communist Party called for British withdrawal from Ireland.

Germany

ON Friday 12th December, during a live talk show on German nationwide television, a leading feminist writer, Martina, refused to be interviewed until she had read a statement about the H-Block and Armagh. As a direct result of this a German member of parliament promised to raise the issue in the Bundestag.

On Saturday 20th December, former blanket man Martin Lawlor, spoke at a large rally in Frankfurt, which saluted the struggle of the hunger-strikers and called for troops out of Ireland.

Martin Lawlor has returned to this country after an extensive one week tour of West Germany, which included six cities: Bielefeld, Munster, Stuttgart, Karlsruhe, Freiburg, and Braunschweig. On his way back to Ireland he addressed a meeting in Strasbourg, in northern France.

Holland

ON Wednesday 10th December an

Ireland solidarity day held in the University of De Harst in Driebergen attracted two thousand students and one hundred and fifty of the teaching staff. Displays of photographs and posters were set up along with bookstalls, video-film shows of Belfast and Derry, and the film 'The Patriot Game' was also shown. Meetings were held during the day on the hunger-strike issue.

Portugal

IN an unprecedented move, the Portuguese parliament unanimously passed a motion in support of the H-Block and Armagh prisoners on Wednesday 17th December. The motion, moved by a group of opposition parties was supported by the government coalition parties.

The text is as follows: "That the Portuguese parliament consider that the situation is a serious offence against the human dignity and fundamental human rights. This parliament is deeply concerned at the continuation of such a situation and the sub-human treatment of the prisoners and appeals to the authorities of Great Britain for complete respect for their fundamental human rights. Those citizens to whom the status of political prisoners has been denied are entitled to such status."

In London, the following day, British premier Thatcher called in the Portuguese ambassador to protest strongly at the motion.

Quebec

A MOTION calling on the British government to extend humanitarian treatment to political prisoners was debated in the Quebec assembly.

Switzerland

THE Swiss Socialist Party held their annual conference on Thursday 18th December, at which the two hundred delegates present voted overwhelmingly to support the hunger-strikers' five demands.



Above: One of the daily pickets on the British consulate in Chicago



Above: Demonstrators outside the British consulate in Boston, last month; below: Kieran Nugent and Maureen Gibson (foreground) with the six VS members of the Danish parliament, during the pair's recent H-Block/Armagh publicity tour



Portrait of a hunger striker



BY SEAMUS BOYLE

TWENTY-ONE-YEAR-OLD Mairead Nugent of Belfast is younger than any of the seven long-term H-Block hunger-strikers, and is the youngest of the three Armagh women prisoners, who ended their eighteen day hunger-strike last Friday.

Arrested on a bombing mission in November 1976, when she was only seventeen years of age, she had by then done many months of active work, and had taken an active interest in republicanism since before the age of eleven.

As a ten-year-old child Mairead saw the Catholic refugees, of the August 1969 loyalist pogroms, coming up from the Lower Falls into her home area of Andersonstown for shelter. And then, as a young teenager, saw the evils of military rule: the Falls curfew in July 1970; internment in August 1971; Bloody Sunday in January 1972; Operation Motorman and the subsequent occupation of nationalist areas in July 1972, including the military take-over of schools; the blanket harassment of the nationalist people especially the youth; the raids and the arrests; and the killings by British troops and sectarian assassins.

A very cheerful, friendly, and talkative teenager, considerate for others and sharply aware of what was going on about her, she (like many others) not surprisingly became increasingly embittered, and

unknown to many of her family, neighbours and disco-going friends — became an active republican.

Extremely stubborn in her beliefs, and the need to translate those beliefs into action, she is a very serious republican and was someone who would always volunteer for the most dangerous of the tasks. Her republican life certainly came a long way before her social life. Not one to wear her republicanism on her sleeve, she did not frequent republican haunts and was extremely security conscious and selfless in her commitment. For someone of her young age (about sixteen, when active) she was dedicated, to an unusual extent, to freeing Ireland the only way possible.

A bit of a loner in republican circles, she would just quietly do what had to be done for the

MAIREAD

Very cheerful, friendly but an extremely serious



Pictured outside the Nugents' grandmother's Iveagh home seven years ago: brothers Freddy, Sean and Martin; Mairead herself, then aged fourteen; and her mother Margaret

The eldest of five children, Mairead has three brothers — Sean, aged 19; Freddy, aged 16; and Martin, aged 13 — and one sister, Brid, aged 8, her look-alike at that age. The whole family — a close family — were severely emotionally affected by Mairead's hunger-strike, a desperate action which they nevertheless fully supported.

CHILDHOOD

Mairead was born in the Iveagh area, off the Falls Road, on June 28th in 1959, the year after her parents — Margaret, now aged 42, and Frederick, aged 48, (whom she fondly calls 'Fred') — were married.

Mairead's mother recalls that she was a very healthy child: 'She was a small baby, but never seemed to look back, once she started growing. Even the first year that she started school she sailed through an epidemic of measles, and was about the only one left at school without measles.'

However, her accident prone.

On one occasion, when aged about six, she fell from the first-floor landing into her yard. But, when her mother rushed her to hospital, she was found to be suffering from a small fracture of her head, upon which she landed!

On another occasion, a year later, Mairead was in the street with her bicycle when she was backed into a wall — but this time she showed an ability to back against the odds, which she was to do at different circumstances years.

At about that time, moved to Andersonstown, the house where she and Mairead first went to Holy Child primary school and then, at the age of

republican cause, and then get on with leading her own life. Her boy-friend — Gerard McDaid — to

whom she is devoted, is currently 'on the blanket' in the H-Blocks of Long Kesh.

Portrait of a hunger striker



BY SEAMUS BOYLE

WHEN MEMBERS of the RUC Special Patrol Group surrounded a house in Greysteel, County Derry, in the early hours of May 2nd 1976, one of the three men they captured after a siege lasting several hours was a totally fearless and determined Republican who had outwitted his pursuers so often and had so many lucky escapes that the RUC themselves were surprised, and delighted, to have caught him at all.

That man was a leading county Derry Republican, Thomas McFeely, from Dungiven, who was — until last week — one of seven men in the H-Blocks to go fifty-three days on hunger-strike, and who celebrated his thirty-second birthday on Christmas Eve.

The savage beating he received outside that house on the morning of his arrest, which he accepted, as always, with the courage of a man who was, as a fellow republican once remarked, "not just an iron man, but an iron horse", was to be the first in a series of incidents of brutal torture, ending in the ultimate ordeal of hunger-strike, which he has endured throughout interrogation and imprisonment and which has brought his case to the attention of the European Commission of Human Rights.

FAMILY

Thomas McFeely, was born nearby to Dungiven in December 1948. His mother, Bridget, aged fifty-eight is from Dungiven, and



Tom McFeely's parents, William James and Bridget, pictured in 1975

his father, William James McFeely, a sixty-two-year-old farmer and cattle dealer, is from Claudy in County Derry.

Now thirty-two, Tom is the fourth child (the oldest of the boys) in a family of thirteen whose ages range from thirty-six

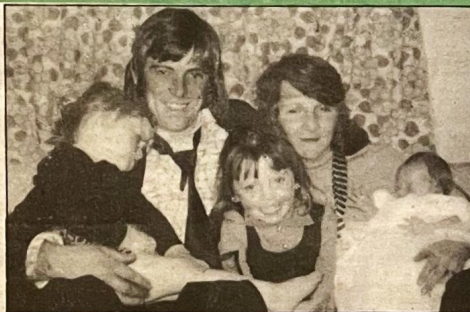
TOM McFEELY

Calm, courageous deeply considerate

to fifteen years old and whose names are: May, married with six children; Bridget, married with two children; Philomena, married with four children; Geraldine, married with four children; Desmond, married with four children; Noel (who is now serving a twelve-year sentence in the Long Kesh cages after being arrested a mere three months before Thomas); Pascal; Siobhan, married with one child; Loretta; Ronald; and Derek (who is still at school).

Tom himself, is one of only two hunger-strikers to be married. He and his wife, thirty-two-year-old Patricia, have three children: Mary, born in 1971; Roisin; and Aine, in 1975.

Like many of his comrades on the hunger-strike, Tom does not come from a traditionally Republican family but is a product of twelve years of 'the troubles'. His family recall his participation in the Belfast to Derry march in January 1969, meeting up with it as it passed through Maghera and subsequently being charged with riotous behaviour after helping to



The McFeelys in 1975: Tom and Patricia with their children Roisin, Mary and Aine

defend the march against one of the many loyalist attacks on it.

After that, he took part in many of the civil rights and anti-internment marches. (He narrowly missed internment himself, not being at home when the Brits raid-

ed on August 10th 1971, and a friend of his was one of the 'Hooded Men'). The marches had a great effect on Tom, but it was Bloody Sunday (although he was not in Derry that day) which was to be the catalyst, as for many Re-

publicans, which brought about active involvement.

POPULAR

Tom is an extremely person, both within his neighbourhood and throughout a wide Dungiven. He is a very extremely considerate person who would give you his time if you needed it, he is with a keen sense of discretion about his own though anxious to do with theirs.

He has an enormous women, which he confides in, which has brought him very close to the female family circle.

Allied to these people, which he applies his high intelligence and calm, his coolness of mind, his ability to carry some matter what — an explanation of how he, made him a valuable asset to the cause both inside and outside. Tom McFeely

URGENT

ly and talkative

ious republican

er, in her childhood, and have a tendency to be prone. On one occasion, when she was six, she fell out of the bedroom window of her home into the back garden. When her mother took her to hospital, she was barely marked — just a small red mark on upon which she had

On another occasion, about a year later, Mairéad was playing with her bike, when a neighbour, knocking her over, that time she hadn't a fear. On both occasions, she had an ability to bounce back. In the way of the odds, in a way was to do again, in very circumstances, in later years, at that time, the family moved to Andersonstown, into where they still live, and first went to the primary school there, and then when she was of the age of eleven, to



Mairéad's grandmother, Bridget McCallan, pictured last year

St. Louise's secondary school in St. James'.

GRANNY

Although the Nugent family moved to Andersonstown, Mairéad's maternal grand-parents remained living in Iveagh — they have lived in the same house for forty-three years — and, as a young girl, Mairéad used to sometimes stay with them at weekends, and, then when she went to St.

Louise's school, went to their house for her lunch.

Mairéad's grand-mother, Mrs. Bridget McCallan, now aged 72, is extremely close to Mairéad, corresponds with her regularly, and is very proud of her as a republican. Known as 'granny' to several of the Armagh women prisoners, she was brought up as a republican herself, and recalls making tea, back in the forties, for Tom Williams, Jimmy Steele, Hugh McAteer, Charlie McGlade, Harry White and others; and recalls, back in the twenties, her own even more direct republican involvement.

Of Mairéad she says: "She was a very good wee girl, and done all my messages when I was ill. It would have been terrible if she had died on their hunger-strike."

HELPFUL

When Mairéad was fifteen, her mother — who was suffering from cancer (of which, fortunately, she is now cured) — had to go into hospital for two weeks for a

serious operation.

Her mother remembers: "Without Mairéad I don't know how we would have coped. She was so kind. Her 'O' levels were approaching and I was afraid to keep her off school. But if she had free periods she would have rushed home..."

"I wouldn't have had to ask her to do anything. She would have helped in the house, and organised the boys to help her with the house-keeping..."

"I could never repay her for her kindness. I just had to say 'I have a headache' and she would say 'Oh, mummy, go upstairs and lie down'..."

"When I had cancer I thought about dying and I thought maybe I had five years to live. And to think she might only have had a few weeks..."

INTERESTS

Mairéad had the interests of an average teenage girl: pop music and a boy-friend. She liked, amongst others, Gary Glitter, Status Quo, David Essex, and David Cassidy (of whom she had a

poster in her bedroom). The only television programme she ever really liked watching was *Top of the Pops*, and would 'break her neck' trying to get to watch that programme.

She always wore the latest teenage fashion: for many months, wearing short trousers (long ones cut to the calves of her legs), (short) 'monkey boots', and a leather jacket. She was as self-conscious of her appearance as the next teenage girl, if not more so, and was always well turned out.

Her mother says, stressing how difficult it must have been for her to engage in the 'no-slop-out-no-wash' jail protest. "It's famous in our house for baths and keeping clean, the immersion heater never seems to be off, and Mairéad was always washing her hair. She always kept her own room shining and whenever unexpected guests arrived we could always put them in Mairéad's room... To think of the terrible conditions she's been forced to live in!"

FRIENDS

One of Mairéad's best friends, and near neighbour is Ann Devlin (née Mulholland), now aged 20, who has known Mairéad for nearly ten years, went to school with her, and used to go with her to discos at the nearby 'ex-service-men's club' (the old Burnt Cabin), a couple of evenings a week.

She says of Mairéad: "She is a very deep person and kept her feelings to herself, whilst also being very talkative. At school, if a teacher shouted at her, or brought her up in front of the class, she just stood and stared. She would keep her sentiments to herself and in such situations would look through people rather than at them."

BOMBING

1975 was the year of the IRA/British truce, but, as the

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which brought him into

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POPULAR

an extremely popular within his family and a wide area around. He is a very kind and considerate man who has lost his last pound if he is also modest, sense of humour, and but his own problems to help others

enormous respect for confide in him, and bought him particularly female members of

these personal qualities apply to all he does, intelligence and calmness, his courage and his try something out — that — with very little of how to do it needed him an extremely to the Republican side and outside jail. Feely attended pri-



land'. He has the ability to be able to argue rationally and calmly with people on any subject, never intolerant of the other fellow's beliefs but sticking doggedly to his own point of view.

Within family life, his parents recall that he would do whatever was asked of him readily, and his sisters recall that his consideration extended to meeting them at the bus stop on dark winter evenings as they returned from work so as to accompany them home. The McFeelys are a close family and Tom, in particular, would always be ready to stand by another of the family in any personal crisis.

SACRIFICING

In September 1969, Tom and Patricia married, and moved down South to Limerick in search of work. However, a cement strike put paid to work in Tom's trade as a bricklayer and they returned North, first to Patricia's mother's home, and then, sometime in 1970, to Antrim where Tom found work and where the couple managed to buy their own house.

By late in 1972 however, Tom's Republican involvement meant sacrificing the home and future material comforts for himself and Patricia and their first daughter Mary, then eight months old, as he — constantly hounded by the British army — went 'on the run'.

Patricia, at that time six months pregnant with a daughter, Ann, who was to die after only two days, moved back to Dungiven and set up home in a caravan, eventually moving into a house in 1976. (The loss of their baby daughter was a cruel blow to them both; one, which Tom, not usually given to emotional display, felt very deeply indeed.)

Shortly afterwards Tom — whose parents' home was being raided almost weekly in pursuit of him — was forced to go 'on the



Tom, pictured in the middle of the back row, with his brothers, from left: Pascal, Ronald, Derek and Noel (now in the cages in Long Kesh)

run' in the South, and it was in May 1974 that he was stopped in a car and arrested by gardai. He was charged with possessing a gun found in a house where he was staying in Donegal, and refusing to recognise the court, was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

However, on August 19th, after only a few months in Portlaoise, the main prison gates were burst open from outside in a planned and brilliantly executed mass jail-break. Nineteen men eventually escaped, among them Tom McFeely, and he went straight back into Republican activity, becoming involved again in the Dungiven area.

EVADED

As during his previous period of activity in the North, up until his eventual arrest in May 1976, Tom was never arrested for questioning by the Brits though he had by now become a major thorn in their side. With a mixture of luck and cool daring he constantly outwitted his pursuers and evaded arrest, often only narrowly.

On one occasion Tom was visiting his wife as two British army

jeeps approached the caravan. Only his daughter Roisin — aged two at that time, but instinctively sensing danger — saw the Brits, and (unable to pronounce the word 'bastards') began dancing up and down excitedly yelling "The bad bas... the bad bas..." Suitably warned, Tom narrowly made his escape.

Another time, approaching a road block in a car with Republican comrades, while others were in favour of turning around and making a run for it, Tom refused to panic and persuaded the cars' occupants to get out and move around the road block through the fields, while the car's driver drove safely through alone, and he and the others got in again.

Although constantly 'on the run', Tom's extraordinary popularity and the respect he was held in by local people enabled him to enjoy something of the social life that, despite being a quietly cautious person and a Pioneer abstainer, since his early youth (only taking a very occasional half pint in later years), he was so fond of.

Each weekend, for instance, he

(continued on next page)



Some of the gaelic football trophies won by the McFeelys

MAIREAD NUGENT

(continued from page 9)

truce dissolved and the IRA began to re-mount acts of armed resistance, a commercial bombing campaign was re-opened in Belfast, hotels were hit, and selective political targets became the order of the day.

In August 1976, IRA Volunteer Danny Lennon was shot dead by British troops in Andersonstown, and the car which he had been driving careered out of control, and the Maguire children were killed (leading to the foundation of the so-called 'Peace Movement').

Mairead was extremely badly shaken by the death of Danny Lennon, whom she knew well personally, and gave up her job as a stitcher to commit herself full-time to the republican cause.

Then, two months later, at the end of October, leading republican Maura Drumm (a long-time friend of Sadie Magill, and also well known to Mairead) was shot dead in her hospital bed by loyalist assassins. Another death which hardened Mairead.

A few days later, on November 3rd, Mairead was arrested.

MISSION

It was a very dangerous mission to carry a 4lb. bomb from Belfast to Millisle on the County Down coast, and in fact it was a mission which went badly wrong. The target was the 'weekend home' of the then Armagh jail governor, in

Ashley Park, a private estate off Moss Road, near Millisle.

Volunteers broke into the unoccupied house and planted the bomb. Unfortunately, responding to a neighbour's report of a break-in, the RUC and British army defused the bomb.

Meanwhile the getaway car broke down and was found at Bradshaw's Brae, on the old Belfast to Newtownards road. Nearby, Mairead, then aged 17, and Patrick McDonnell, then aged 25, also of Andersonstown, were arrested.

They were taken to Bangor RUC barracks and several days later appeared at a special court in Holywood.

Mairead was remanded to Armagh jail, and later her weekly remand appearances were moved to a Belfast court.

REMAND

From January 1977, whilst on remand in Armagh jail, her cell mate was Shirley Devlin from Newington, Belfast, then aged 18, (and last month released after nearly four years in jail).

Shirley, who was to be her cell mate for the next year, recalls of Mairead (known as 'Margaret' to the other prisoners to distinguish her from another young Andersonstown republican, Mairead Farrell): "In ordinary life, Margaret's very easy-going, but then, if you start talking to her about republicanism, she just changes. Very deep down she's very bitter. She's a very staunch republican, and is game for any-

thing, anything that's going on."

Whilst on remand, Mairead got engaged to her boy-friend Gerard McDaid, from the New Lodge Road in Belfast, then also on remand in jail.

Gerard, called 'Gerald' by Mairead, and two years older than her, was arrested shortly before her, and sentenced shortly before her, also — coincidentally — to two years' imprisonment (on a completely unrelated charge). He had been her boy-friend for about two years before their imprisonment.

Indicative of Mairead's essential shyness is that her cell-mate, Shirley, only realised that she was engaged when one day she saw an engagement ring hung around Mairead's neck.

At that time there were about forty young women on remand in Armagh jail — as always with republican prisoners — they respected republican discipline rather than jail rules. But Mairead and Shirley always found it difficult to get up in the mornings: they were meant to be up by 9.30a.m. and to have their cells clean by 10a.m.

One morning, they were particularly late, and when the prisoner in charge of them came round for cell inspection, they were still in bed. Mairead, cheerful, and irrepressible, as always, simply handed her 'superior' the still unemptied poe and said 'go and empty that'.

Whilst on remand, and afterwards 'on the protest', she used to sit on her bed, and with her arms swinging, sing away to herself (although, apparently, she has not a note in her voice).

SENTENCED

On June 29th 1977, the day

after her eighteenth birthday, Mairead was sentenced to twelve years' imprisonment (as was Patrick McDonnell, arrested with her). They refused to recognise the court — a decision which at first, Mairead's parents found difficult to accept.

Her mother recalls: "The day of the court — I'll never forget it — after about an hour I felt like getting up and saying to the judge, 'Tell us what you're going to give her.' We just got that feeling that the whole thing was sewn up."

Mairead, described as 'ruthless' by the judge in the non-jury Diplock court, was convicted of possessing and planting the bomb at the jail governor's house, of possessing a Colt .45 pistol and ammunition, and of belonging to Cumann na mBan.

The prosecution claimed that Mairead was trained in the use of firearms and that she had been in the guard of honour at the funeral



Mrs. Margaret Nugent, speaking at a London H-Block/Armagh demonstration earlier this month

of Maire Drumm.

PROTEST

Incarcerated in Armagh jail, and denied political status, Mairead (and Shirley Devlin, sentenced to four years a few days earlier) immediately went on the 'no-work' protest, joining their ten or eleven women comrades already on it.

Mairead was to share a cell with Shirley until January 1978, when her cell mate, up until the hunger-strike commenced became Rosemary Callaghan of Shorn Strand.

Over the last three years, Shirley Devlin recalls: "Margaret and Rosie Callaghan and Christine Beattie (another protest prisoner) never stopped keeping the rest of the wing going. They used to always be starting a 'slugging match' out of the 'spies' (spy-holes in the cell doors). Margaret and Rosie would always be in the middle of everything."

Shortly before the hunger-strike began in Armagh jail, Mairead's parents went up to see her on a special 'compassionate' visit. Mairead cried — very unusually, in front of her parents — as she told them of her decision to go on hunger-strike, and of the grave consequences that decision might entail for her.

Her mother — who since then has been speaking incessantly at hunger-strike meetings and giving press interviews, including a trip to England — states: "In a way I feel ashamed, because a lot of the things Mairead said and felt, perhaps when I was her age I should have seen and acted upon... She is very brave... Perhaps a lot of my generation have a lot to answer for, to the young ones in prison now."

TOM McFEELY

(continued from page 9)

would accompany his wife to the local ballroom for a dance, confident he would be immune from arrest despite being frequently recognised, and also assisted in avoiding arrest — there as elsewhere — on every occasion.

One time in 1975, his car was stopped by Brits driving away from the ballroom, and a torch shone in his face, but he stayed cool and was allowed to drive on. He drove calmly and very slowly away for a mile or so, then accelerated quickly. Had he been recognised, even belatedly, by the Brits he would certainly have been caught along that long straight road, but Thomas McFeely was better known to them by reputation rather than by sight.

NET

However, the net was closing in on him. Having spent part of the day in a house in Greysteel, Tom and two friends called in briefly at a nearby bar. But while he was there a telephone call came asking for him by name. Feeling he had stayed in the area too long, Tom and his friends drove off but soon encountered a series of road blocks and heavy Brit and UDR activity. Now fearing, correctly as it turned out, that their presence in the immediate area had been detected, the three men returned to the house with reluctance.

At two o'clock in the morning of May 2nd 1976, the house was surrounded by RUC Special Patrol Group men, but Tom and his companions — realising they would be assassinated in the dark — refused to leave till dawn broke, by which time a heavy force of Brits and UDR had besieged the house.

Leaving the house, Tom was taken into the back yard and kicked unconscious by UDR men,

his life being saved, ironically, by a British soldier: a fact which he, always extremely honest, was later to refer to in court.

He was bundled into a car by RUC men, but after driving a few yards the car stopped. Tom was invited to make a run for it; but wisely declined.

Taken to nearby Limavady barracks he was held and tortured there for seven days, without access to a solicitor, an outside doctor, or relatives. Typically when his wife and family visited him he made a brave face about it and his spirits though dampened were not broken; nor had he made either a written or verbal statement. Yet the cigarette burns on his chin, and his torn clothing, could not be disguised.

In addition to this and other acts of brutality, and an almost total lack of sleep for the seven days, a length of rubber tubing had been passed around his neck, either end of which was pulled by two interrogators in a strangulation exercise until Tom collapsed unconscious.

TRIAL

His trial took place in Belfast, over three days in February 1977 after nine months' remand in Crumlin Road jail. He was charged with having fired a shot from the house in Greysteel early on the day before his arrest, and narrowly missing an RUC man; as well as, with possession of a rifle and armed robbery. Instead of a barrister, Tom defended himself with considerable skill, exposing prosecution witnesses' lies and stupidity on a number of occasions to the embarrassment of the judge.

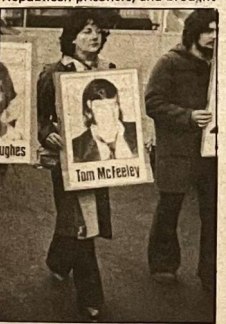
The charge of attempted murder of an RUC man, for example, was dropped when Tom showed that from where the RUC man claimed to be standing he must either have stretched his neck fifteen yards or else the

bullet must have been able to turn corners! He was however found guilty of the other charges and sentenced to fourteen years and twelve years, the sentences to run consecutively — a total of twenty-six years!

Tom went 'on the blanket' in the H-Blocks immediately, and thereby exposed the anomaly of Britain's so-called 'criminalisation' policy. For on the other side of Long Kesh camp was his younger brother Noel, serving twelve years on a manslaughter charge (reduced from murder) in Cage 12, with political status.

Noel had originally been arrested in February 1976 — only three months before Thomas — and sentenced to two years. With the customary remission he was due for release twelve months later but on that day, February 28th 1977, he was handed his release papers at Magilligan camp and before leaving the prison was re-arrested. He was taken to Castle-reagh, tortured for three days, sentenced to twelve years and sent to the political status cages in Long Kesh.

The disparity in the two brothers' treatment and the length of Tom's sentence, clearly shows the highly political nature of the British government's treatment of Republican prisoners, and brought



the words of Tom's trial judge ringing back: "You are a very intelligent and dedicated young man, and I intend to remove you from society for a very long time. You are a danger to society, and a bigger danger to the RUC."

H-BLOCK

In the H-Blocks Tom's uncompromising stand (he didn't take a visit for six months, until his wife begged him for the children's sake), and his consideration for the morale of younger prisoners, brought him into continual conflict with the prison regime, frantically determined to remove the Blocks' leadership as the 'blanket protest' grew.

Tom found himself continually 'on the boards', once for a period of six weeks. During this time, one of the things he felt keenest, as a strong Catholic, was the refusal to allow him to attend mass on Sunday. Tom responded with the tactic of hunger-and-thirst-strike on two occasions, and on the second strike he went for eight days and came within hours of death before the prison governor capitulated and released him from solitary confinement. During another period 'on the boards' the governor entered his cell to find Tom sitting up cheerfully, reading 'Republican News'.

When four 'representative' 'blanket men' took the British government to the European Commission of Human Rights in 1978, Tom McFeely was one of those involved. As his sister Geraldine says: "He has suffered as much torture as any other man in the North of Ireland."

And when the ultimate decision came, in October of this year, to embark on a hunger-strike 'to the climax of death, if necessary' it was inevitable that Tom with his courage and determination and his concern always to avoid others suffering, should be one of those to volunteer.

COMMITTED

Patricia, his wife, admits that

although expecting it she was 'shattered' by the news, but typically, she was totally committed in her support: "I knew that he meant it, he never lied. You could say I was proud of him in every way. I knew he was sure why he was doing it: he couldn't bear to see the family suffering when he came up on visits and saw him slowly dying, and he believed it better to die doing what he believed in rather than do twenty-six years as a criminal."

His parents, brothers and sisters also, were firm in their support, knowing that all other options to achieve their demands had been exhausted by the 'blanket men'.

When Patricia saw her husband two days before the end of the hunger-strike "he was physically weakening, but still alert and able to talk in a whisper. His spirits were fantastic, great altogether." And of course, "he worried mostly about the rest of them, especially Sean McKenna and Tommy McKearney who were the most critical. He never complained about his own condition once."

Tom McFeely's personal popularity in his home town was best exemplified by the extremely widespread response of Dungiven's population to all the protests and rallies held during the hunger-strike. Nevertheless, at a massive protest outside Dungiven barracks on Thursday evening, before the news broke, Patricia McFeely was preparing for a wake for Christmas, and to tell the children that Santa would not be coming this year.

Now, with Tom and his comrades recovering, and the hopes of a just settlement, she says: "I would like to thank very sincerely all those people in Dungiven and everywhere else who supported the 'blanket men' and the women in Armagh in their demands. I cannot ever thank them enough for helping to save my husband's life."

DUBLIN MADE ME

DUBLIN MADE ME by C.S. 'Todd' Andrews, Mercier Press, 1980

TODD ANDREWS was born in 1901 in Dublin and grew up first in the Summerhill district and then in Tintern. This book of memoirs which goes up to 1924 when he was finally released by the Staters from Tintern Number 2, the Internment camp at the Curragh, is a thoroughly well written and fascinating account of what life was like in Dublin from the turn of the century, through the 1916 Rising, the Tan War and, finally the Civil War.

Andrews begins by describing the different classes in Dublin when he was a child. He relates how he was born into what he calls 'the lower middle class of the Catholic population' at a time when 'the slums kept increasing' and 'the poor got poorer and poorer'. The mass of the Catholic population were as yet untouched by Sinn Féin or the Gaelic League.

At the bottom of the heap were 'the have-nots of the city, consisting of labourers, dockers, coal heavers, shop attendants, messenger boys and domestic servants.'

Even those who had regular employment were seldom above the poverty line and many were far below it. Most of their children emerged from the National schools illiterate and destined to live in abominable slum housing. They supplied the rank and file of the British army, known as 'the Dubs', and kept the Artane Industrial school supplied with pupils. Their main concern was to provide food and lodgings for their children. Amongst them trachoma and rickets were endemic. They were religious on Sundays and accepted their misery as the will of God and had no time for politics or trade unions until Jim Larkin came along.

CASTLE

In contrast were the 'Castle Catholics'. Their accents were indistinguishable from the Dublin Protestants, and, like them they played golf, rugby, cricket, tennis, hockey and croquet. They entertained, had many servants and sent their children to English Catholic schools like Ampleforth or Downside, or, as a compromise, Clongowes, the top Jesuit school in Ireland. They would crawl on their bellies or pay large sums of money for an invite to a reception to Dublin Castle.

Below them were the Catholic middle middle class, medical practitioners, solicitors, grocers, publicans, civil servants, journalists, merchants and bank managers. They too usually had a couple of servants but were generally nationalist when it came to politics. They did not aspire to play golf or croquet but did aspire to be 'respectable', and were staunch and ostentatious supporters of the church, erecting fine monuments to themselves in Glasnevin Cemetery.

They were glad that, in the social scale, they were above the lower middle class, who lived above their shops, took no holidays, seldom entertained and whose children played soccer, regarding Gaelic football and hurling as only 'fit for country goms'. Their children as Todd Andrews did, went to the Christian Brothers' schools.

CHILDHOOD

The author follows up with an entertaining account of his childhood pastimes. The games played in the streets, the visits to the Zoo, a trip to O'Donovan Rossa's funeral, a meeting with 'Skin the Goat', who drove the Invincibles to



TODD ANDREWS
— memoirs of Dublin 1900-1923

Phoenix Park to execute Cavendish and Burke, the waxworks, milk rounds with his uncle Christy, the occasional runaway horse, all these are paraded in an interesting style.

His family were not interested in politics, although his father did favour Larkin, and young Andrews came under the influence of Ewart Wilson, a family friend who was a fervent Gaelic Leaguer. Under his influence Andrews joined the Fianna in 1912.

Unfortunately he mentioned this in confession to a priest who immediately informed his mother who was horrified. Similarly he spent a few months at St. Enda's school, where he studied under Pearse, but this did not last long since his Dublin accent, lack of Irish and his passion for soccer as opposed to Gaelic did not stand him in good stead.

He was in Dublin during 1916 but saw little, being restricted to Tintern, but the executions of the leaders had a great impact on him and helped to breed a life-long hatred of Britain in him.

In March 1917 he joined the Rathfarnham Company of the Volunteers. In retrospect he tells

of being amazed at how conservative they all were, on virtually all social questions, including Women's Liberation.

'Our whole upbringing had been based on mysteries, glorious, sorrowful or joyful. We were very ignorant and superstitious.'

'We also had a far too awesome regard for our leaders in those days.'

This was a regard which, as he got to know many of the principal figures of the Tan War and the Civil War, Andrews was to drastically revise.

ACTION

1919 saw his first taste of action: a raid for arms on Sir Frederick Shaw's mansion at Bushy Park. At that time he was on the point of leaving school and going to UCD.

The Rathfarnham unit was fairly inactive however at that time, most of the fighting going on in the countryside rather than Dublin and it was not until April 1920 that the newly arrived Black and Tans got round to arresting the Tintern men. Todd was scooped and taken to Portobello Barracks, where he met Peadar Clancy, vice O/C of the Dublin Brigade, and who was soon to be murdered by the British.

He took part in the hunger-strike and, with the rest of the men was released after ten days. He went on the run, although still attending college sporadically where he got to know Andy Cooney and, to a lesser extent, Kevin Barry. It was the execution of Barry, he said, which did 'more than anything since 1916 to stoke the fires of hatred for the British.'

Andrews was out on Sunday 21st November with one of Collins' squads, when the British spies were executed. He regrets that his squad's target Captain Nobel, was

REVIEW BY PAT DUGGAN

not at home. That afternoon the Brits carried out their Bloody Sunday massacre in Croke Park. Andrews' comments on the Brit press the next day are all too reminiscent of today's papers.

'They sucked Roget's Thesaurus dry to find words to denounce us. We were gunmen, terrorists, extremists, murderers, assassins, butchers, thugs. They were particularly vocal about the sense of horror that swept their nation. No race commands such an inexhaustible supply of horror as do the British when their interests are adversely affected.'

Shades of Mountbatten.

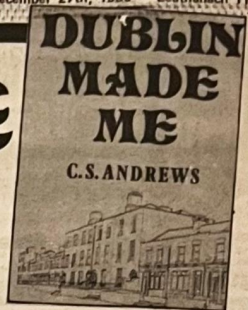
Andrews goes on to point out however, that, next day, could be seen one of the strangest sights ever seen in Dublin. 'From all corners of the capital began a trek of minor spies and spotters and touts into the Castle. They brought their families and their personal belongings. They crowded in behind those high walls in full admission that their day was done.'

INTERMENT

Andrews soon had his collar felt again and this time ended up in Arbour Hill and then the Rath Internment Camp, and he gives a good account of camp life and the men he met there.

Like many others he was horrified when the Truce came in July, but believed that it could not last and was merely a delaying tactic. To him and his colleagues the idea that Collins could have sold out the Republic was almost a blasphemy.

In September, getting bored



with camp life, he and forty other men succeeded in tunnelling their way out. He reported back for active service, and was sent to Donegal to organise a training camp for senior officers in Dungloe, where he met Peadar O'Donnell, who was to give him his first real political and socialist education.

He was shocked and, he says, incredulous when the treaty was signed, and even more shattered when he witnessed the Dail debates where it was ratified by 64 votes to 57. 'I did not even dream that the IRB could have had any covert part to play in its acceptance by the Dail. But I was rapidly learning. Never again, in my life, did I accept unquestionably any man's claim to leadership, not even my idol, de Valera.'

REPUBLICAN

Andrews took the Republican side and was in the thick of the Civil War. He was in the Hammam Hotel when Brugha was killed. He worked with Ernie O'Malley; organised around Dundalk; and was with Aiken when the town was recaptured from the Staters.

As he became more socialist and more disillusioned with the whole fratricidal conflict his views on many things changed. Like his comrades he was disgusted with the attitude of the Church and Cardinal Logue's Pastoral excommunicating the Republicans, which, while causing him bitter anguish, made him hate the Staters and their 'Quislings' even more.

He worked with Liam Lynch trying to pull together the separated Republican forces in the deep south, and, to the end refused to surrender, even when he felt things were hopeless after the latter's death. He avoided arrest when Austin Stack was captured, but was soon afterwards seized in a house in West Cork and taken to Tintern Camp where he saw out the few remaining weeks of the war.

Andrews ends with the defiant words: 'Despite much disenchantment I was more firmly convinced than ever of the validity of Wolfe Tone's Theory: To subvert the tyranny of our execrable Government, to break the connection with England, the never-failing source of all our political evils and to assert the independence of my country—these were my objects.'

ENIGMA

On his release from prison, however, Todd Andrews became involved in the founding of Fianna Fail, was on the party executive and was later prominent in several state-owned companies including the ESB, Bord na Mona and CIE. The fact that he never got involved directly in Leinster House politics may account for the unapologetic openness of the present volume.

However, it remains an enigma that a man who can tie together with such perception, the social, economic, cultural and nationalistic strands of the 1916-24 period, should also be so closely linked with the Free Statism and its consequent hopeless compromise which his book so clearly abhors.

The second volume of his memoirs, which he is currently working on, may cast light on this anomaly.

In the meantime, this first volume remains an enthralling, fascinating and immensely readable book. Read it.



IRA men move down Grafton Street in Dublin during the Civil War

Christmas greetings

AGNEW, Paddy, (H-Block). Christmas greetings to our son Paddy and his heroic comrades on the blanket protest. May Victory soon be theirs. All our love, Mum and Dad.

AGNEW, Paddy, (H-Block) Christmas greetings to our brother Paddy and to all his brave comrades on the blanket protest. You are always in our thoughts and prayers. From Seamus, Martina and family, Damian, Francis, Martin, Patsy and family, Anne, Noel and family, Patsy and Paddy.

ARMSTRONG, William, (Wormwood Scrubs). Christmas greetings to our friend Billy and a special wish on his birthday. Greetings also to all our friends in English jails especially Fr. Patrick Fell, Dickie Glenholmes, Bobby Storey, and Ronnie McCartney. From Leo and Maureen Wilson and family.

BARNES, Joe, (H-Block); COYLE, Marian, (Limerick Prison); MALLON, Kevin, (Portlaoise); McFEELEY, Malachy, (Camp 11, Long Kesh). Christmas greetings and best wishes. From Sheila and Aine.

THE ANDERSONSTOWN YOUTH AGAINST H-BLOCK AND ARMAGH send Christmas greetings to all our comrades in the H-Blocks and Armagh, especially to all those from Andersonstown. You have fought for us, so we will fight for you.

BATESON, Anne; BATESON, Fisharr; BATESON, Peter. Christmas greetings to Anne Bateson (Armagh), Finbar Bateson (H-Block), and Peter Bateson (Camp 10, Long Kesh). One star shines brightly. From the Sheridan-Lee-Bateson Sinn Féin cumann, South Derry.

BELL, Paddy, (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings and best wishes. From Paddy Devine and family.

BELL, Paddy, (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings from Paddy Dundon.

BELL, Paddy, (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings and best wishes. From Joe Clarke cumann, Enniscorthy.

BERKERY, Liam, (H-Block). To our son and brother, Liam. May your Christmas at least be peaceful. With all our love, mumma, John, Aisling, Treasa and Dermot.

BERKERY, Liam, (H-Block). A peaceful Christmas to our nephew and cousin Liam. Love from uncle Paddy, auntie Maria, Denise, Sean and Kerry.

BERKERY, Liam, (H-Block). Happy Christmas, Liam, to you and all your comrades on protest for political status. God bless you all. From Dick, Ellen and Diane Hill.

BERKERY, Liam, (H-Block). Hope this, your last Christmas inside will be as happy as possible. Don't worry, we'll make up for the last three, next year. With all our love, Ronnie and family.

BERKERY, Liam, (H-Block). Solidarity greetings at Christmas time to you and all your comrades. Love from Kate, Joe and family.

BRADLEY, John, (H-Block). Christmas greetings to our dear son. Best wishes and freedom for the New Year. Love from mum, dad, brothers and sisters.

BRADLEY, John, (H-Block). Christmas greetings to my brother. Best wishes and freedom for the New Year. A strong will and a happy heart will see you through the worst of times. Love from your sister Angela, brother-in-law Gerry and niece Caoimhe.

HEARNE/CROWLEY SINN FEIN CUMANN, COBK, CO. CORK, sends greetings to all prisoners at home and abroad.

BRADLEY, John, (H-Block). Christmas greetings to a very dear friend. Happiness and freedom for the New Year. From Mairead, wee Gerry and family. UTP.

BRADLEY, John, (H-Block). Greetings John, at Christmas. Oppressed people throughout the world are one in their struggle for justice. Peace and liberty. Best wishes. From Gerald.

BRADY, Jackie, (Portlaoise). A very happy Christmas from the Marshall family.

BROWNLEE, Bridge, (Armagh). Christmas greetings to Bridge and all your brave comrades. Love from Brendan and Rita, Eamon and Barbara, Gerald and Grania.

BURNS, Jimmy; WALSH, Martin; WATSON, Joe. To my brother Joe, brother-in-law Martin and cousin Jimmy, happy Christmas. Victory to the blanket men! Love Maurea.

BURNS, Arthur; QUINN, Dominic, (Portlaoise). Wishing Arthur and Dominic a very happy Christmas. Hoping the next one will be spent in freedom. Best wishes from the Agnews.

BUTLER, Eddie; DUGGAN, Harry; O'CONNELL, JOE; O'DOWD, Brendan; and all their brave comrades in English jails. Christmas greetings from Bill O'Shea, Ballylongford, Kerry.

THE AUSTRALIAN IRISH REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT sends Christmas and New Year greetings to all Republican prisoners and their families on behalf of republican supporters throughout Australia.

BUTLER, Eddie, (Leicester). Best wishes for Christmas, Eddie, from mum, dad, sisters and brothers. Also greetings to Brendan Dowd and Brian Keenan, and to all our girls and boys in prison.

BUTLER, Eddie, DOWD, Brendan; DUGGAN, Harry, O'CONNELL, JOE (England) Nollagh Shona, Uta.

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND H-BLOCK COMMITTEES send Christmas and New Year wishes to the courageous H-Block and Armagh prisoners. Your fight is our fight.

CALLAGHAN, Rosemary, (Armagh). Solidarity greetings at Christmas time to Rosemary. May the New Year bring you all you wish for. From the Nugent family.

CALLAGHAN, Rosemary, (Armagh). Greetings to my daughter Rosemary at Christmas and the New Year. God bless you and your brave comrades. From mother, Malachy and Jackie. XXX.

CALLAGHAN, Rosemary; NUGENT, Mairead, (Armagh). Christmas greetings to my sister Rosemary and our friend Mairead. God bless you both. From your sister Jacqueline, brother-in-law Joe and niece Caoimhe.

CALLAGHAN, Rosemary, (Armagh). Greetings to our sister Rosemary and her brave comrades at Christmas and the New Year. Victory to you and all your comrades. From your sister Geraldine, brother-in-law Raymond and nephew Clare; your sister Marian, Terry and Sister; and your sister Jacqueline, brother-in-law Joe and nephew Fergal.

THE CATHAL HUGHES SINN FEIN CUMANN, DUBLIN sends Christmas greetings to all POWs in Irish and English jails.

CAMPBELL, Kevin, (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings. Kevin, from your wife Bernadette and children Anthony, John, Brid and Kevin. XXXXX.

CAMPBELL, Philip, (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings. From Mary Mo and Michael.

CARROLL, John; NOLAN, Jimmy, (Portlaoise). Greetings to Jimmy and John and all the lads. From all of us in Nenagh.

CARROLL, John; NOLAN, Jimmy, (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings to John and Jimmy and all the boys in Portlaoise. From Seamus, Martha and Dermot, Puckane.

CASSIDY, Noel, (H-Block). Christmas greetings. Noel, and a very special wish for your birthday. All my love. From Ann. XXXXX.

CASSIDY, Noel, (H-Block). Christmas greetings. From daddy, Tina and Sheelagh. Also Happy Birthday on the 29th.

CASSIDY, Noel, (H-Block). Happy Christmas and best wishes on your birthday. From Leila, Nuala and family.

CASSIDY, Noel, (H-Block); KINSELLA, Sean, (Gartree). Christmas greetings from the Tony Ahern Sinn Féin cumann, Clones.

CASSIDY, Noel, (H-Block). Christmas greetings and happy birthday. From Imelda, Peadar and family.

CASSIDY, Noel, (H-Block). Solidarity greetings at Christmas. Noel, from Steven, Patricia and family, Armagh.

CHILLINGWORTH, (Green), John and Billy, (H-Block). A very happy Christmas to both of you. You are not forgotten in Dublin. All our love, Paul, Marie and children.

CLARKE, Jim, (H-Block). Well Jim, I hope this Christmas is a little happier and that the next is still even happier surroundings. Tell all the lads I was asking about them. All the best. Donna.

COLLINS, Liam; RAINEY, Terry; BUTLER, Paul, (H-Block). Seasonal

greetings to Liam, Terry, and Paul. Hoping this will be your last Christmas on the blanket. From Peter and Geraldine.

COREY, Martin, (Camp 10, Long Kesh). Christmas greetings. Hope your next one is spent at home. From your mate Jim, Dorothy and family.

COREY, Martin, (Camp 10, Long Kesh). Christmas greetings to our dear son and brother Martin. From mum, dad and all the family, Lurgan.

COREY, Joe, (H-Block). Christmas greetings to you Joe. From your mate Colm (H3) and all the Scullion family.

CORRIGAN, Robert Francis, (H-Block). Best wishes and Christmas greetings. Robert, from your mother, father and family. Also from your sister Sally, Liam and family, Beir Rua.

COYLE, Marian; McDermott, Deirdre, (Limerick Prison). Happy Christmas Rita and Rose.

COYLE, Marion, (Limerick); Patrick (H-Block). Christmas greetings. And best wishes to Marion and Patrick from all the family.

CRANE, Teddy, (H-Block). All the best to you and your brave comrades at Christmas time. God bless you all. From mother, father, brothers, sisters, and nephew Kevin. And a special greeting to your daughter Lisa. XXXXX.

CRANE, Teddy, (H-Block). Greetings to my brother Teddy at Christmas. Hoping the New Year will bring you just what you need. God bless. From your brother Raymond, sister-in-law Geraldine and nephew Claran.

CRANE, Teddy, (H-Block). Christmas greetings to you Teddy. Our thoughts and prayers are for you. From Seamus, Malachy, Jackie and Rosemary (Armagh).

CULBERT, Michael, (H-Block). Hope this Christmas sees the end of all the sufferings endured by you and your comrades these past years and that you are returned to your family soon. Love from Gary and Donna.

AN CUMANN CABHRACH, DUN DEALGAN, with all our members and supporters the compliments of the season. We also thank them for their generous support during the past year and hope they will continue to respond with the same generosity during 1981. Solidarity greetings to all our POWs in Ireland and Britain.

CUNNINGHAM, Buty, (Albany). Sincere greetings for Christmas and the New Year. From Christine, Billy and family. Also from Susan and family.

CUNNINGHAM, Gerard, (Long Lartin). Sincere greetings for Christmas and the New Year. From Christine, Billy and family, and from Susan and family.

CUNNINGHAM, Gerry, Buty, and CLUSKEY, John; McFADDEN, Con; O'NEILL, Eddie; and all Irish POWs in England, Ireland, and Asia. Seasons greetings. From Teresa MacSwiney Sinn Féin cumann, Hammarham, London.

DARRAGH, Sile, (Armagh). Solidarity greetings and belated birthday wishes. Sile, all our love. From Kate and Joe.

DOHERTY, Brendan; LEEN, Matt; O'SULLIVAN, Danny; WALSH, Jerry; and all the boys in Portlaoise jail. Christmas greetings from Bill O'Shea, Ballylongford, Kerry.

DOYLE, Mary, (Armagh). Special greetings to you Mary this Christmas. God bless you all. From Joe and Margaret Bell, Lenadon.

DOYLE, Mary, (Armagh). Revolutionary greetings to our friend Mary and to all her comrades in British and Irish jails. Love from Peter and Geraldine.

COMHAIRLE CHUIGE LAIGHEAN, SINN FEIN sends solidarity greetings this Christmas from all the officers and members to the men in H-Block and the women in Armagh. Victory to the 'blanket men'! Victory to the women in Armagh! Forward to a democratic socialist republic.

DOHERTY, Hugh, (Parkhurst). Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year, thinking of you always. From James, Midge, Aine, M, and Maureen; Eamonn and Seamus; Joe, Rosie, John and Aine.

DOHERTY, Joe, (Crumlin Road). We hope that it won't be long, Joe, until you can enjoy another Christmas like last year. All our love and thoughts are with you. From Ronnie, Harry O'Donoghue, and Andrea.

DOHERTY, Joe, (H-Block); AGNEW, Paddy, (H-Block); DULLAGHAN, Peter, (H-Block); McFEELEY, Tom and his comrades. We may have had great men, but we will never have better than the blanket men. All the best from Brenda and Marie.

DONNELLY, Vincent, (Leeds). Happy Christmas, Vincent. From Colin, Vincent, Ailin and Declan O'Donnell.

DORAN, James, (H-Block). Christmas greetings. Jimmy, all my love. From Agnes. XXX. UTP.

DORAN, James, (H-Block). Greetings for Christmas and the New Year, Jimmy. Love Margaret. XXX. UTP. Also from Marie and Patricia.

DORAN, James, (H-Block). Greetings for Christmas and the New Year. From Mr. and Mrs. McAtee and family. Also from Damien, Eilish and family.

DORRIAN, Bernard, (Crumlin Road). Well, Bernard, you may not be here, but sure we'll have your share of the drink. Take care kid. From your mates Ferg, Marty and the lads.

DORRIAN, Bernard, (Crumlin Road). We hope you have a very happy Christmas and may this be your last away from home. Lots of love. From Ronnie and family.

DORRIAN, Bernard, (Crumlin Road). Christmas won't be the same without you my darling. I hope we don't have to spend any more apart, for one is

one too many. I'll love and miss you even more at this very special time. With all love, your wife Michelle.

DOWD, Brendan, (Leicester). Christmas greetings to our son and to Eddie and Brian in Leicester prison. Harry, Joe Hughie and all the boys in Parkhurst, Albion, Isle of Wight, Brendan, Danny, and all the boys and girls in the North of Ireland. If prayers can save you, you have them. From John and Mrs. Dowd, Rathfriland, Dublin.

DOWD, Brendan, (Leicester Prison). Christmas greetings from your sister. Love Ann, Mike, Lisa and John.

DOYLE, Mary, (Armagh). Wishing you a happy Christmas, Mary. Also to your comrades Mairead Farrell and Mairead Nugent and to all the women in Armagh and the men in Long Kesh. From Lisa McGuigan family, Short Strand and Birmingham.

DOYLE, Mary, (Armagh). Special greetings to you Mary this Christmas. God bless you all. From Joe and Margaret Bell, Lenadon.

DOYLE, Mary, (Armagh). Revolutionary greetings to our friend Mary and to all her comrades in British and Irish jails. Love from Peter and Geraldine.

DOYLE, Mary, (Armagh). Special greetings to you Mary this Christmas. God bless you all. From Joe and Margaret Bell, Lenadon.

DOYLE, Mary, (Armagh). Revolutionary greetings to our friend Mary and to all her comrades in British and Irish jails. Love from Peter and Geraldine.

AN CUMANN CABHRACH COMMITTEE, LONDON, sends revolutionary Christmas greetings to all Irish POWs in England and Ireland. The committee would like to thank all those who gave financial aid to our fund during 1980 particularly those supporters in America, England and Ireland. We wish you all a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

DOYLE, Mary, (Armagh). Greetings Mary for Christmas and the New Year. From Peter and Liam.

DOYLE, Mary, (Armagh). Wishing you a happy and holy Christmas, Mary. Greetings also to your comrades who were on hunger-strike with you, Mairead Farrell and Mairead Nugent. God bless you all. From the McGuigan family.

DUGGAN, Harry, (Parkhurst). Happy Christmas, Harry. With love from your favourite girlfriend, Edie. XXX.

DUMMIGAN, Kevin, (H-Block). Christmas greetings from mum, dad and family.

FANNING, Eugene, (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings from Ma, Pa, Joan and Chris.

FANNING, Eugene, (Portlaoise). A Aine. XXX.

FANNING, Eugene, (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas. All my love Sheila. XXX.

FITZSIMONS, Hugh, (H-Block). Christmas greetings to my brother Hugh and to my cousins Alex, Sean and Tommy. Thinking of you today and every day. UTP. All our love from Lilian, Liam and baby Kelly. XXX.

FITZSIMONS, Hugh, (H-Block). Christmas greetings to my son Hugh and to my nephews, Sean Fitzsimons, Alex McCrory and Tommy Cogswell. St. Martin pray for them. Keep up the fight. All my love, from mum.

FITZSIMONS, Hugh, (H-Block). Christmas greetings to you Hugh and to our cousins Sean, Alex and Tommy. Thinking of you always. From your brothers Seamus and Harry, and from your sister Maureen and Martin. XXX.

FITZSIMONS, Hugh, (H-Block). Christmas greetings to you Hugh and to our cousins Sean, Alex and Tommy. Thinking of you always. From your brothers Seamus and Harry, and from your sister Maureen and Martin. XXX.

FITZSIMONS, Hugh, (H-Block). Christmas greetings to you Hugh and to our cousins Sean, Alex and Tommy. Thinking of you always. From your brothers Seamus and Harry, and from your sister Maureen and Martin. XXX.

FITZSIMONS, Hugh, (H-Block). Christmas greetings to you Hugh and to our cousins Sean, Alex and Tommy. Thinking of you always. From your brothers Seamus and Harry, and from your sister Maureen and Martin. XXX.

FITZSIMONS, Hugh, (H-Block). Christmas greetings to you Hugh and to our cousins Sean, Alex and Tommy. Thinking of you always. From your brothers Seamus and Harry, and from your sister Maureen and Martin. XXX.

FITZSIMONS, Hugh, (H-Block). Christmas greetings to you Hugh and to our cousins Sean, Alex and Tommy. Thinking of you always. From your brothers Seamus and Harry, and from your sister Maureen and Martin. XXX.

FOX, Mick; MONAGHAN, Jim; REILLY, Joe; and all the boys in Portlaoise. A happy Christmas. God bless and God's blessing on the boys in H-Block. From Mick and Nancy O'Rourke. Also from Mick and Margie.

FRIEL, Peggy; BOYLE, Berna, (Armagh). Christmas greetings to Peggy Friel and Berna Boyle and to all their comrades fighting for Irish freedom. From Paddy Ward, Austin.

GASTON, Charlie, (H-Block). Christmas greetings, Charlie, and to all your comrades. Hope your next one is spent in freedom. From the McGuigan family.

GASTON, Charlie, (H-Block). Happy Christmas Charlie. We are behind you all the way. God bless. From dad, brothers and sister.

GIBSON, Andy and Joe. Best wishes for Christmas. From your brother Stephen UTP.

GLENHOLMES, Dickie, (Bristol). Christmas greetings to you Dickie. From your wife Lily and kids.

GLENHOLMES, Dickie, (Bristol). Revolutionary greetings Dickie for Christmas and the New Year. From Jim.

GLENHOLMES, Richard; STOREY, Bobby, (Bristol Prison). Greetings at Christmas comrades. Far away you may be but always in our thoughts. G.B.

GLENHOLMES, Dickie; CAMPBELL, HARKINS, Eddie, (Edde, England). Christmas greetings to Dickie, Bobby and Eddie and to all Irish POWs in English jails. From Stephen and family, Eilish and all the Higgins family.

GORMAN, Tommy, (H-Block). Christmas greetings Tommy. From your wife, Anne, and all the kids.

GORMAN, Tommy, (H-Block). Christmas greetings to Tommy. From your mother, brothers, sisters-in-law and all the family.

GORMAN, Tommy, (H-Block). Christmas greetings from Rita, Brendan and all your friends in Dublin.

HARKINS, Eddie, (H-Block). Best wishes, hope to see you in the New Year. Eileen.

HAUGHEY, Stephen, (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings. From mum, dad, Michael and Jackie.

HAUGHEY, Stephen, (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings Stephen. From Mel and Berna. Also from John and Julie.

HAUGHEY, Stephen, (Portlaoise). Wishing you a happy Christmas. You're always in our thoughts. From your loving wife Marian, children Stephen and Julie. Also from Noreen, brother-in-law Sean and from Mrs. Quinn.

HAYDEN, Vivian, (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings from Josephine, Brian and Roisin.

HAYES, John, (Gartree). Christmas greetings from your family.

HEANEY, Martin, (H-Block). Solidarity greetings for Christmas and the New Year. From aunt Marie, Seamus, Sean and Clare.

HEANEY, Martin, (H-Block). Christmas greetings, son. From dad and sister Jennifer.



ARMAGH WOMEN'S PRISON

Christmas greetings



CUMANN CABBACH, WALKINSTOWN, sends Christmas greetings to all our prisoners in Ireland and England, especially the 'blanket men' and the prisoners in Armagh.

HEAPES, Gerry, (Portlaoise), Christmas greetings. Hope you stay off the smokes.
HEAPES, Gerry, (Portlaoise), Happy Christmas, daddy. From Jacqueline, Caroline, Gerard, Joan and Michael. Lots of love.
HEAPES, Gerry, (Portlaoise), Happy Christmas. From your loving wife, Breda.
HEAPES, Gerry, (Portlaoise), Christmas greetings and best wishes. From Joe Clarke cumann, Finlas.

HEAPES, Gerry, (Portlaoise), Christmas greetings and best wishes from Paddy. From Gerry; KINSELLA, Mick; McDERMOTT, George; SHANAHAN, Paddy; TOWNSEND, Liam, (Portlaoise). Wishing you and all the boys in the 'bog' the best of seasons greetings lads. Special greeting to you Liam. Up the Boys of County Armagh. From Mick and Eileen.

HIGGINS, Frankie, (H-Block), Christmas greetings to our dear son Frankie. Our thoughts and prayers are with you today and every day. Love from mum and dad.

HIGGINS, Frankie, (H-Block), Christmas greetings to my brother, Frankie. Love and solidarity. From Eilish, Karen and Lisa, Tony and Bernie, Marie, Eamon and Caren.
HIGGINS, Frankie, (H-Block), Christmas greetings to our brother Frankie. Love from John, Maureen and kids; Maureen, Peter and kids; Willie, Rae and family; Rita, Terry and baby; Ned, Dymna and family; and Teresa and Damien.

HOGAN, Michael, (Portlaoise), Thinking of you Micky, and all your comrades this Christmas. Love from all the family. xxx UTP.

HOGAN, Michael, (Portlaoise), Happy Christmas to you Michael and all your comrades. Best wishes from the O'Neill family.

HOGAN, Michael, (Portlaoise), God bless you and all your brave comrades in Portlaoise. From granny and all at No. 10.

HOGAN, Michael, (Portlaoise), Happy Christmas to you Micky and all your comrades. From Pat, Lizzie and Michael.

THE FENNELL-McDONNELL SINN FEIN CUMANN, TWINBROOK and Teshbrook RAC wish to send Christmas greetings to all their prisoners in Long Kesh, Cummin Road, Portlaoise and in jails in England. Your struggle is our struggle, your victory will be our victory.

HOLDEN, Michael, (H-Block), Solidarity greetings for Christmas and the New Year. While there is still one of us imprisoned, none of us are free. Lots of love from mum, brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces, aunts and uncles. Victory to you all.

HUGHES, Frank, (H-Block), Christmas greetings, Frank. May God preserve our rebel sons and daughters to strike more blows for freedom. Love from Dolores and Paddy UTP.

HUGHES, Frank, (H-Block), Christmas greetings son. We send all our love to you. Love from mum, dad, brothers, sisters and all your many friends.

JOHNSTON, Johnny, (Portlaoise), Christmas greetings. With love Rosie xxx
JOHNSTON, Johnny, (Portlaoise), Happy Christmas to my daddy. Love Sean. xxx

KEAGAN, Seamus, (H-Block), Christmas greetings to Seamus. From Bernard, Brian and Gerry.

KEENAN, Brian, (Leicester), Solidarity greetings, Brian, at Christmas. From your old pals Tartan, Frog, Blondie, Goldfinger, Doc and Soup. xxx. Yours in struggle.

KEENAN, Brian, (Leicester Prison), To our very dear friend, Brian. All our very best wishes and thoughts are with you. Also Brendan O'Dowd and Eddie Butler, Leicester. Love Martin, Marie and children.
KEENAN, Brian, (Leicester Prison), Revolutionary greetings at Christmas, friend and comrade. With you in spirit at this time. Venceremos G.B.

KELLY, Jimmy, Revolutionary solidarity greetings this Christmas. Marie and Andy O'Connor.

KERR, Robert, (H-Block), Solidarity greetings at Christmas, Robert. God bless you and all your comrades. From aunt Kathleen and Joe Henry. Also from uncle John McConnell.

KERR, Robert, (H-Block), Solidarity greetings at Christmas time Robert. We are with you in spirit. From Dick, Eileen and Diane Hill.

KERR, Robert, (H-Block), Solidarity greetings at Christmas time, Robert. We are behind you all the way. Lots of love from mum and dad.

KERR, Robert, (H-Block), Happy Christmas Robert. Keep up the spirits. Lots of love from Catherine, Patrick and Martin Kerr.

KIND, Sean, (Portlaoise), Happy Christmas Sean. Love from George, Noreen and kids.

MALONE, Hugh, (H-Block), Merry Christmas and a happy New Year. All our love from Sarah, Rog, Martin and Tracy. xxx
MALONE, Hugh, (H-Block), A merry Christmas and a happy New Year to you Hugh. All the best. From Brendan xxx.
MEAGHER, Eddie, (Portlaoise), Christmas greetings and best wishes, from Paddy Devine and family.

MEAGHER, Eddie, (Portlaoise), Christmas greetings and best wishes. From Joe Clarke cumann, Finlas.

MEAGHER, Eddie, (Portlaoise), Happy Christmas Eddie. Also to Pat Bell, Kevin McGinnis, Jimmy Kelly and Joe Kelly. Eamon.

DUNGIVEN RAC sends solidarity greetings to Liam McCluskey and Kevin Lynch, and to Tom McEneaney, and all their comrades in H-Block and Armagh.

KNOCKER, John, (H-Block), Greetings to you, John. Hoping this is the last Christmas you and your comrades will have to spend 'on the blanket'. From all the Kirkpatrick family.

LARKIN, Joe, Revolutionary solidarity greetings this Christmas. Marie and Andy O'Connor.

LARKIN, Joe, (Portlaoise), Christmas greetings from Jack Grogan.

LAWLOR, Peter, (Portlaoise), Seasons greetings to Peter and Bernard. Wishing you both a Happy Christmas and a bright New Year. From Eileen.

LAWLOR, Peter, (Portlaoise), Christmas greetings and love from Anne and little Peter.

LAWLOR, Peter, (Portlaoise), Christmas greetings from Ballyconne. Michael and Mary.

LOUGHLIN, Denis, (Long Kesh), Christmas greetings, Denis. Hope this is your last one spent inside a British jail. Love Annie-Marie.

LOUGHLIN, Thomas, (H-Block), Greetings to you and to all your brave comrades this Christmas time. All our love and prayers are with you. Love from mum, dad, sisters and brothers.

LOUGHLIN, Thomas, (H-Block), Greetings to our nephew, Thomas, and to all his brave comrades. You are always in our thoughts and prayers. From aunt Bell; aunt Sally, uncle Brian and family; aunt Olive and family; and aunt Lily, uncle Gerry and family.

LOUGHLIN, Tom, (H-Block), Christmas greetings to my son-in-law, Tom. Wishing him and friends all the best. From mother-in-law, R. Moore.

LOUGHLIN, Tom, (H-Block), Christmas greetings to our brother-in-law Tom. Although we don't see you, you are always in our thoughts. From all the Moore family.

LUNDY, Matthew, (H-Block), Christmas greetings to our son. Best wishes and freedom for the New Year. Love from mum, dad, brothers, and sisters.

LUNDY, Matthew, (H-Block), Christmas greetings to you and all your brave comrades. Best wishes for the New Year. Love from granny and uncle.

LYNCH, Kevin, (McCluskey, Liam), (H-Block), Christmas and solidarity greetings to Kevin and Liam, three years 'on the blanket'. From friends and comrades.

LYNCH, Sandy, (H-Block), Merry Christmas and a happy New Year to you Sandy. God bless you. From Mr. and Mrs. Malone and family.

THE FRIENDS OF IRELAND CLUB, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, sends Christmas greetings to all Irish political prisoners in English and Irish jails.

MADDEN, Hugh Francis, (H-Block), Christmas greetings and a very happy birthday son. We salute your courage in your struggle for justice. From mum, dad, brothers and sisters.

MAQUIRE, Tommy, (Long Kesh), Christmas greetings from Rita, Bernard and all your friends in Dublin.

MAQUIRE, Tommy, (Long Kesh), Christmas greetings to you Tommy, we are thinking of you always. God Bless from your friends Chrissie, Richard and baby Bronagh. xxx UTP.

MALLON, Kevin, (Portlaoise), Christmas greetings to you and all the lads in Portlaoise. From the Ennis family.

MALONE, Hugh, (H-Block), A merry Christmas and a happy New Year Hugh. You are always in our thoughts and prayers. God bless you and all your comrades. Victory to the 'blanket men'. All our love from mum and dad. xxx

JAMES CONNOLLY SINN FEIN CUMANN, BALLYFERMOT sends Christmas greetings to all Irish republican POWs, especially those in England.

JAMES CONNOLLY SINN FEIN CUMANN, BELFAST sends Christmas greetings to all republican prisoners in jail in Ireland, England and America, especially to the H-Block 'blanket men' and Armagh women protestors.

MALLISTER, David, (H-Block), Christmas greetings, David. From the Nugent family.

MALLISTER, David, (H-Block), Christmas greetings, David. From the McCallen family.

MCBREARTY, Daniel, (Portlaoise), Greetings to you and all your comrades this Christmas time. Victory to the IRA! From Danny.

MCBREARTY, Daniel, (Portlaoise), Christmas and New Year greetings to you Daniel. Always in our thoughts and prayers. All our love from aunt Veronica and uncle Joe (USA). UTP.

MCBRIDE, Pat, (McCarville, Liam), (H-Block), Christmas greetings to Pat and Liam. God bless you and give you courage and strength in your fight for freedom. From Jean, Malachy, Jackie and Rosemary (Armagh).

GAUGHAN/KEENAN SINN FEIN CUMANN, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN, sends best wishes to all Republican POWs their families and Republican Volunteers.

THE GHQ STAFF, OFFICERS AND VOLUNTEERS OF CUMANN NA mBAN send greetings to all our imprisoned comrades in Irish and English jails. In particular we pledge solidarity with our comrades in Armagh jail and H-Block for political status. Victory to the liberation struggle!

LAURA CRAWFORD-PAUL FOX SINN FEIN CUMANN, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA, sends solidarity greetings to all Republican prisoners in English and Irish jails. Especially to the H-Block and Armagh prisoners on protest for political status. Your unconquerable heroism in the struggle against British imperialist tyranny is our inspiration. Bua dona fir fluid!

MEAGHER, Bernard, (Portlaoise), Happy Christmas, Mucker. Michael and Mary.

MEEHAN, Gerry, (Hogan, Micky), (Portlaoise), 'They may lock you away, deny you your rights, but Ireland's true sons continue to fight'. Love Mary T. xxx UTP.

MEEHAN, Gerard, (Meeks), (Portlaoise), Happy Christmas 'Meeks'. Love from the Hogans xxx UTP.

MOLLOY, Paddy, (H-Block), Revolutionary Christmas greetings to my comrade Paddy, also to Sid, Zack, Tomboy, Dickie, Sean and Teddy and to all those from the Short Strand on protest for political status. Go mbuidh an bua eagain san bhliain seo chugainn. From Dan.

MOLLOY, Patrick, (H-Block), Christmas greetings to our son and brother Patrick. May you and all your brave comrades on protest for political status have all your wishes come true in the New Year. God bless you all. From mum, dad and all your brothers.

MOORE, Tommy, (Fragile), (H-Block), Always thinking of you and your comrades in English and Irish jails. From your mother, R. Moore, brothers and sisters.

MOORE, Tommy, (H-Block), Christmas greetings to my brother 'Fragile'. Wishing you and all your comrades a happy Christmas and a happy New Year. From Mary, Martine and Mark.

MOORE, Tommy, (H-Block), Christmas greetings to my husband Tommy. From your loving wife and children Carol, Pauline and Thomas. Thinking of you always.

MORGAN, Mick, (Portlaoise), Have a happy Christmas. Hope to see you over the Christmas period. From Catherine and all the McGrogan family.

MORGAN, Mick, (Portlaoise), Happy Christmas Mick. I will be down to see you when I get home. Love Rosario. xxx
MORGAN, Micky, and all the boys in Portlaoise. Greetings from Maggie Longford.

MORGAN, Mickey, Greetings from Graine and Des.

MORGAN, Mickey, (Portlaoise), Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year. From your two little girlfriends in Tipp - Noreen and Aine Morgan.

MALLISTER, David, (H-Block), Greetings to our son David at this holy Christmas time. What more can we say only that we support you now and always. Victory to the 'blanket men'! God bless you all. Lots of love always. From mum, dad and all the family circle.

LONDON WOMEN'S CO-ORDINATING GROUP ON ARMAGH sends solidarity and best wishes to the women in Armagh jail in their struggle for political status and their comrades in H-Blocks. Love and sisterhood.

THE MARKETS-ORMEAU ROAD HUNGER-STRIKE COMMITTEE, RAC AND GREEN CROSS send solidarity greetings for Christmas to Terry 'Yes we can' McCullough, John Boyle, John Moran, John McLarnon, Jim Llamore, Brian McEneaney, Seamus O'Brien, Billy Clinton, Sean McGrady, Richard Barron, Philip McCullough, Theresa McAvoy, Patrick Mulligan, B. Dorrian, Stephen Hagray and P. McDonald.

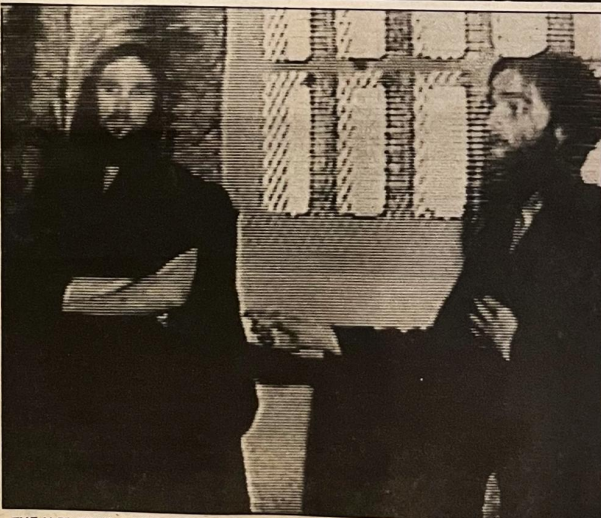
MARTIN MCKENNA SINN FEIN CUMANN, EDENMORE, DUBLIN sends solidarity greetings to all our comrades in prison.

THE MARTIN-TRACY SINN FEIN CUMANN, SHORT STRAND, sends Christmas greetings and solidarity to all our political prisoners in Irish and English jails, especially to those incarcerated in the H-Blocks and Armagh.

THE NEWTOWNABBEY HUNGER-STRIKE COMMITTEE sends seasonal greetings to Mary Doyle who remains an inspiration to us all in her exemplary record as a revolutionary republican. Greetings also to all Irish republican POWs everywhere.

PADRAIC PEARSE SINN FEIN CUMANN, DUNLOY, send Christmas greetings to all the POWs in Long Kesh, Magilligan, Armagh and Portlaoise.

THE PETER McNULTY-PATRICK CANNON SINN FEIN CUMANN, DUBLIN sends Christmas greetings to all our prisoners of war at home and abroad, especially the women in Armagh and the men in H-Block. Your victory is our victory.



THE H-BLOCKS, LONG KESH

Christmas greetings



McCabe, Pat. (H3-Block). Seasons greetings to my husband, Pat, this Christmas and for the New Year. You're always in my thoughts. From your loving wife, Bridie.

McCabe, Pat. (H3-Block). Christmas greetings to my daddy. Lots of love, kisses and hugs. There's no daddy in the whole wide world as good as you. From your daughter Mary xxx.

McCabe, Pat. (H3-Block). Seasons greetings to our son-in-law Pat. Thinking and praying for you always. God bless you. From the McGarry family and all in No. 7.

McCabe, Pat. (H3-Block). Greetings to our son Patrick for Christmas time and the New Year. You are always in our thoughts and prayers. From mother, father and all the family. Also from granny, gramma and all at 33.

McCann, Danny. (H4-Block). Greetings Denny at this holy Christmas time to you and all our brave men and women in English and Free State prisons. From the McAllister family.

McCann, Jennifer. (Armagh). Revolutionary greetings at Christmas time to you Jennifer. From little Sid and family, and from Donna and Marion.

McCann, Jennifer. (Remand, Armagh); BRADLEY, Hugh. (H4-Block); SLOAN, Eugene. (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings to our friends incarcerated in English and Irish hell holes. Thinking of you always. From your friends, Eileen and Tommy Strong, and children, Stephanie, Flory, Tracey and baby Bronagh Sinead.

THE REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT, DONEGAL, sends Christmas and solidarity greetings to the 'blanket men', women prisoners in Armagh, republican prisoners in Portlaoise and English jails.

McCann, Jennifer; DOYLE, Mary. (Armagh). Christmas greetings to my two friends in Armagh. Thinking of you always. From Mary McGinn and brother Peter.

McCann, Ned. Christmas greetings, Ned. From Mary and Sinead, xxx.

McCAUGHY, Tony. (H5-Block). Christmas greetings to our son Tony and to his friends Jimmy (H3) and Dermie (H5). From your mother and father, brother Sean and sister-in-law Clare.

McCOLLUM, Seamus. (Portlaoise). Seasons greetings and best wishes to our dear friend Seamus. You are always in our thoughts. May God bless you and keep you safe until we meet again. Love from Mick and Eileen xxx.

McCOOL, Brian; McCOOL, Gary. (H4-Block). All our love and best wishes are with you dear sons. We pray that the spirit of Christmas will enter your lonely cells and bring you joy, peace and victory soon. With all our love. From mother, father, Alan and Roy.

McCOOL, Brian; McCOOL, Gary. (H4-Block). All the very best for Christmas, Brian and Gary. Please God, the New Year will see your dreams come true. Victory to the black men and to the Armagh women. Love from all your aunts, uncles and cousins.

McCRORY, Alex; FITZSIMONS, Hugh. (H4-Block). Solidarity greetings Christmas and the New Year. All our love from aunt Lily, uncle Sean and cousins.

McCRORY, Alex. (H4-Block). We wish you and your comrades victory. We are in solidarity with you. Solidarity also with Sean (H5) and Hugh (H4). All our love, mum, dad, sisters and brothers.

McCRORY, Alex. (H4-Block). Christmas greetings to you Alex. All our love and solidarity from Kay, Denis and family.

McCRORY, Alex; FITZSIMONS, Sean, Hugh. (H4-Block). Solidarity with you and your comrades. Victory to you and all your comrades. Love from uncle Bobby, Jean, and family. Also from Gran, grandad and Angles.

McROBERTY, Jim. (H4-Block). We all hope this is your last Christmas in that hell hole. We think of you constantly, and more so at this special time. From all the Kirkpatrick family.

McCRYSTAL, Marcus. (H4-Block). Christmas greetings to our dear son and brother. Solidarity greetings also to all your comrades on protest. Love from mum, dad and brother.

McCLOSKEY, John. (Wormwood Scrubs). Happy Christmas, John, from the McCloskey family.

McCURTAIN, Cyril; DOHERTY, Brendan; McNAMARA, Bob; SULLIVAN, Danny; WALSH, Gerry. (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings from Declan, Bobby, John and the gang.

McCURTAIN, Cyril; McGETTIGAN, Sean. (Portlaoise). Best wishes at Christmas to Cyril, Sean and all the 'Cork Knobblies' — Colm Mac Muileadhaigh, Donal, Kevin and Ben who won't be having a pint in 'Hattsons' from Mary and Brendan. UTP.

THE SHORT STRAND HUNGER-STRIKE COMMITTEE sends Christmas greetings to all republican POWs in English and Irish jails, especially to those in the H-Block and Armagh.

McDAID, Gerard. (H3-Block). Revolutionary greetings to you at Christmas, Gerard. Bus dona cine coisigh, bus dona muintir na h-Eirinn, beidh bus againn. From Mairiad (Armagh).

McDAID, Gerard. (H3-Block). Greetings to you at Christmas, Gerard, and all the best for the New Year. From the Nugent family.

McDONALD, Phil. (Dumlin Road). Greetings to Phil. Hope you have freedom next Christmas and that New Year brings you more happiness than last year. Love from Michelle and Bernard.

McDONNELL, Gerard. (H3-Block). Christmas greetings and a belated wish for your birthday. From Michael, Pat and family.

McDONNELL, Gerard. (H3-Block). Christmas greetings Gerard and belated birthday wishes. Love from Agnes.

McDOWELL, Maurice. (H3-Block). Christmas greetings to you and all your comrades. Thinking of you always. Love from your mum, dad, brother and sisters. Also from granny and uncle Frank.

McDOWELL, Maurice. (H3-Block). Greetings to you this Christmas, Maurice. Keep your chin up. Love from your sister Anna, brother-in-law John and niece Liza and Angela.

McERLAIN, Sean; GASTON, Charlie. Happy Christmas, lads. Hope your next one is spent in freedom. From all your mates in Dunloy.

McERLAIN, Sean. (Magilligan). Happy Christmas Sean. From the Gaston family.

McERLAIN, Sean. (Magilligan). Christmas greetings Sean. From Angela, Aidan and Julie.

McGEOWN, Gerard. (H5-Block). Christmas greetings Gerard. From Ann, xxx.

McGEOWN, Pat. (H4-Block). Revolutionary Christmas Greetings to my friend Pat McGeown. Out of sight but never out of mind. From Hando.

McGERRIGAN, Sean. (H4-Block). "While there is one of us imprisoned, none of us are free." From mum, dad and family.

SINN FEIN POW DEPARTMENT, DUBLIN sends Christmas greetings to all POWs in Irish and English jails.

McGROGAN, Kevin. (Portlaoise). Revolutionary solidarity greetings this Christmas from Mick Cleary and Jimmy Lennon.

McGROGAN, Kevin. (Portlaoise). Seasons greetings Kevin. Hope you have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from Mrs. O'Toole and family.

McGROGAN, Kevin. (Portlaoise). Revolutionary solidarity greetings this Christmas. No doing wheelies on the bike with the rest on the back. Marie and Andy O'Connor.

McGROGAN, Kevin. (Portlaoise); and all the lads in Portlaoise. From Barry and Frances Fitzpatrick and family.

McGROGAN, Kevin. (Portlaoise). Seasons greetings to you Kevin. Best wishes for a happy Christmas. From Eileen.

McGROGAN, Kevin. (Portlaoise). Seasons greetings and best wishes for a happy Christmas and prosperous New Year. From Paddy and Theresa.

McGROGAN, Kevin. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas. Love from Auntie Pat, Betty, Uncle Paddy and Frances. See you soon.

McGROGAN, Kevin. (Portlaoise). A very happy Christmas. Missing you always. Your sister Catherine and nephew, Mark xxx.

McGROGAN, Kevin. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas. Love from Auntie Pat, Betty, Uncle Paddy and Frances. See you soon.

McGROGAN, Kevin. (Portlaoise). A very happy Christmas from your brother and sister Catherine and nephew, Mark xxx.

McGROGAN, Kevin. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas. Love from Auntie Pat, Betty, Uncle Paddy and Frances. See you soon.

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McGROGAN, Kevin. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas. Love from Auntie Pat, Betty, Uncle Paddy and Frances. See you soon.

STUDENTS AGAINST H-BLOCK/ARMAGH in UCD, TCD, QUB, UCC; Derry College of Technology; Ulster Polytechnic; the New University of Coleraine; the College of Business Studies, Belfast; Bolton School; College of Education, Dublin; St. Patrick's College Maynooth; the College of Caring, Cathal Brugha Street; Magee College, Derry; College of Technology, Kevin Street; Carlow Regional Technical College; and the College of Commerce, Rathfriland; Christmas and solidarity greetings to all Irish political prisoners and their families.

McGUIGAN, Ellen. (Armagh). Christmas greetings, Ellen. From Peter and Liam.

McGUIGAN, Ellen. (Armagh). Merry Christmas, Ellen. To you and all your comrades. From your uncle George and family, Birmingham. Also from your uncle Oliver and family, Short Strand, and from your cousins Joe and Margaret-Anne.

McGUIGAN, Ellen; DOYLE, Mary. (Armagh). Wishing you both a happy and holy Christmas. Greetings also to Mairiad Farrell, Mairiad Nugent and all your comrades in English and Irish jails. God bless you all. From your friends Mary and Mick Connolly.

McGUIGAN, Ellen. (Armagh). Thinking of you, Ellen, at this special time of the year. From Paddy, Kathleen and family, Glenewagh.

McHENRY, Seamus. (Cap 10). Best wishes at Christmas son. Thinking of you always. Love from your dad.

McHENRY, Seamus. (Cap 10). Christmas greetings to my brother Seamus. All our love. From your sister Seilene and brother-in-law Patsy, xxx.

SOUTH LONDON WOMEN AGAINST IMPERIALISM and solidarity greetings and best wishes to our sisters in Armagh jail, and all the comrades in H-Blocks.

McHENRY, Seamus. (Cap 10). Best wishes at Christmas Seamus. "I want to tell you that to have you for a brother is a cause enough for pride, I could never find your equal even if I tried." Love from Kathleen.

McHENRY, Seamus. (Cap 10). Merry Christmas, uncle Seamus. Love from Brendan and Sinead xxx.

McHENRY, Seamus. (Long Kesh). Merry Christmas and a happy New Year to you Seamus. You are always in our thoughts and prayers. God bless. From Mr. and Mrs. A. Malone and family.

McKEEFREY, Patsy. (H-Block). Hoping your next one will be spent in freedom. From all the people in Swatara, UTP.

THE TOM WILLIAMS — THOMAS HARTE CUMANN SINN FEIN, LURGAN and Christmas greetings to all Irish political prisoners at home and abroad especially to the women on protest in Armagh and the 'blanket men' in the H-Block, Long Kesh. Victory to the prisoners! Victory to the Irish people!

McLARNON, Perry. (H5-Block). Wishing you all you're wishing yourself at Christmas. Hoping the New Year will be victorious for you and all your comrades. From Alan, the McCool family and Brian and Gary (H-Block).

McLAUGHLIN, Terry. (H-Block). Christmas and New Year greetings to my friend. Hope to see you soon. From Mary McGinn.

McMAHON, Kevin. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas, Kevin. See you soon Mary Mc and Michael.

McMAHON, Kevin. (Portlaoise). Breithla faoi mháthair duit a Chaimín. Mary Mc.

McNALLY, Dermot. (H5-Block). Christmas greetings, Dermot. From mum, dad and all the family, Lurgan. Hope your next one is spent in freedom.

McPHILLIPS, Junior. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas, Junior. From all your friends in Clones.

McPHILLIPS, Junior. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas, Junior. Enjoy yourself. From your loving mama and all the family.

McPHILLIPS, Junior. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas, Junior. From Frank, Nellie and James.

McPHILLIPS, Junior. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas, Junior. From Hugh and family.

McQUILLAN, Joseph. (H3-Block). Christmas greetings to our son Joe. Best wishes and freedom for the New Year. Love from mum, dad, brothers and sisters.

McQUILLAN, Joseph. (H3-Block). Christmas greetings to you Sean. Best wishes for the New Year. See you soon, from Jim and Pat.

McVEIGH, Sean. (H5-Block). Christmas greetings to our son Sean. God bless you all. From mum, dad and all the family.

McVEIGH, Sean. (H5-Block). Christmas greetings to you Seany. Greetings also to Hughie, Philip, Teddy, Frankie, 'Baldy', Sammy, Billy 'Doc', Peter, Jerry, Mario and Zack. From Arder, Delirde and family.

McVEIGH, Tom. (H-Block). Best wishes for Christmas. From Stephen Gibson.

NUGENT, Mairiad. (Armagh). Christmas greetings to our dear daughter Mairiad, may the spirit of Christmas guide you through this tormenting period in your struggle for political status and may the New Year bring the granting of your just demands. From mum and dad. God bless you.

NUGENT, Mairiad. (Armagh). All our love and support, Mairiad, at this holy Christmas time, and all the infant saviour and his holy mother bless you and all your brave comrades. Victory to the brave soldiers of Ireland. From Seamus, Peggy and David (H5).

NUGENT, Mairiad. (Armagh). Solidarity greetings to our sister Mairiad at Christmas time. We are behind you all the way. From all your brothers and sisters.

NUGENT, Mairiad; FARRELL, Mairiad; DOYLE, Mary. (Armagh). Christmas greetings to Mairiad, Mairiad and Mary. May God bless you and give you strength. From your comrade Rosemary (Armagh) and all the comrades in English and Irish jails.

NUGENT, Mairiad. (Armagh). Greetings at Christmas time to our granddaughter Mairiad. May God bless you and all your comrades. From your granny and granda.

NUGENT, Mairiad. (Armagh). Greetings to you at Christmas time Mairiad. We are with you in spirit. From John and Bobby.

NEARY, Peadar. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas Peadar, love and all good wishes, thinking of you all the time. From your loving wife Sinead and children, Siobhán, Padraig, Cathal, Daithí, Sinead agus Ursula.

NEARY, Peadar. (Portlaoise). Happy Christmas Peadar from Mrs Maghran and Sean! All your friends in the Burturbet Sinn Fein cumann; your employees at Unit Tool; and Cathal, Mary and baby Daithí.

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AN PHOBLACHT/REPUBLICAN NEWS wishes all its readers a happy Christmas, and also sends Christmas Greetings to all Irish republican prisoners in British, Free State and American jails, especially the H-Block 'blanket men' and Armagh jail protesters.



PORTLAOISE

Christmas greetings



ROGERS, Peter, (Portlaoise). All the best at Christmas Peter. Good luck Greetings to you all your mums. From your loving sister Peggy, Pat and family. Also from your sister Robin, Michael and Brenda.

ROGERS, Peter, (Portlaoise). Seasons greetings and best wishes Peter, always thinking of you. From 'The Cousin'.

ROLAND, Jim, (H3-Block). Christmas greetings to our son Jim. Thinking and praying for your every day. Love from mum and dad.

ROLAND, Jim, (H3-Block). Christmas greetings to our brother Jim. From Joyce, Marcella and Phillip.

ROONEY, Gerard, (Portlaoise). Greetings from Des Mulligan and Grainne.

ROONEY, Gerald, (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings Gerard. From Teresa and wee Sam. Also from your mother, father, all your brothers and sisters, nephews and nieces and family circle.

ROONEY, Hughie, (Portlaoise); Philip, (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings to our sons Hughie and Philip. Love and best wishes. From mum, dad and all the family circle.

TRINITY COLLEGE SINN FEIN CUMANN, DUBLIN and solidarity greetings to all Republican prisoners in their struggle.

ROONEY, Hughie; ROONEY, Philip; ROONEY, Gerald; ROONEY, Brendan. Christmas greetings to my cousins Hughie, Philip, Gerald, and Brendan. Love and solidarity. From Eilish and family.

SCULLION, Colm, (H3-Block). Christmas greetings to you Colm. From 'Spud'. May your next be spent in freedom.

SCULLION, Colm, (H3-Block). Christmas greetings, Colm. Your next one will be spent in happier surroundings. Love from mum, dad, Eugene, Brenda and Cathy.

SCULLION, Colm, (H3-Block). Solidarity greetings to you Colm at this festive season. God bless you all. Love from Colette and John Joe.

SCULLION, Colm, (H3-Block). Christmas greetings to you Colm and to all your brave comrades. God bless you all. From aunt Phyllis, Frankie, Maureen and cousins Maureen, Lawrence and family in Moortown.

SHANAHAN, Paddy, (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings to my dear husband, Paddy in Portlaoise jail. Looking forward to '81 when we will all be together. Love Lil, Martina and Rita.

SHANAHAN, Paddy, (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings to our dear dad, not forgetting your comrades. Love Mary, Tony, Gary, Sinead and Clara.

O SEANACHAIN, Padraig, Beannachtai na Nollag d'ar nAiste. Padraig O Seanachain cimi cogtais sa Príosún i bPortlaoise. Araigh le '81 agus do shaoime. O Phadraig, Cathriona and Caeen.

SHANAHAN, Paddy, (Portlaoise). Wishing you a very happy Christmas. Love from Deirdre and Alan.

SHANAHAN, Paddy; SWAN, Seamus, (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings from the O'Reilly family.

SHANAHAN, Paddy. Greetings from Maggie Langford and Grainne.

SHANAHAN, Paddy. Greetings to you and all Republican prisoners in Irish and English jails. From the Martin Fionnuala cumann Sinn Féin, Rathfriland.

SLOAN, David, (Portlaoise). Greetings and best wishes. From Anne Doyle, family and Seamus.

SLOAN, Eugene, (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings with love from Una.

SLOAN, Gerry, and Tony, (Crumlin Road). Christmas greetings from Una and Eugene (Portlaoise).

TONY AHERNE SINN FEIN CUMANN, CARRIGALINE, CO. CORK, sends Christmas greetings to all Republican POWs.

SMYTH, Kieran, (H4-Block). Greetings Kieran on this your fourth Christmas in the hall blocks. We're thinking of you always. From your sister Deborah, brother-in-law Danny, and nieces Cara and Danielle.

SMYTH, Kieran, (H4-Block). Christmas greetings, to you and to all your comrades. You are always in our thoughts and prayers. Love from your mother, Seamy and your brothers Raymond, Dane, Sean and Liam. Also from your granny and grands.

SWAN, Seamus, (Portlaoise). Nollaig sona Seamus. Also to James Kavanagh, Sean Finn, Seamus Twomey, Pat Torphy and all the lads. From Stella Swan.

THOMPSON, Bill, (H-Block). Best wishes for Christmas. From Stephen Gibson.

TREANOR, Patrick, (Portlaoise). Christmas greetings and best wishes to Pat. From all his friends in the O'Duill cumann.

TURF LODGE YOUTH AGAINST H-BLOCKS AND ARMAGH sends solidarity greetings to all Irish prisoners of war in Irish and English jails. Your struggle is our struggle.

TREANOR, Patrick, (Portlaoise). All the good wishes for Christmas and New Year from John and Mary.

WALSH, Kevin; WILLS, Donald, (Portlaoise). Seasons greetings to you and all your comrades and to all the POWs in Long Kesh and Armagh. From Terence MacSwiney Sinn Féin cumann, Hammermill, West London.

WALSH, Martin, (H-Block). Seasons greetings to our good friend Martin, who will be spending his fourth Christmas on the blanket. Not only to-day but every day you are in our thoughts. From Eileen and Angela.

WALSH, Martin, (H-Block). Best wishes and seasons greetings to our dear friend Martin. You are forever in our thoughts. God bless from Paddy and Theresa.

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THE CALLAGHAN FAMILY, Short Strand and Rosemary (Armagh) send Christmas greetings to all Irish political prisoners in English and Irish jails. Especially to Margaret, Teddy, Gerard and Dicky. May God bless you and all your comrades.

THE DALY O'REILLY AND MCTAGUE FAMILIES, Manchester, send Christmas greetings to Sean Kinella, Brendan Dowd, Gerry Small, Pat Guilfoyle, Paul Norrmy, Stephen Norrmy, Noel Gibson, Martin Coughlan, Eddie Byrne, Fr. Patrick Fell, Anne and Eileen Gillespie in jail in England and to Kevin O'Brien in Long Kesh.

THE DEERY FAMILY, Belfast, send Christmas greetings to all republican POWs in jails at home and abroad. Special thoughts and greetings to the women in Armagh and to the men on the blanket in Long Kesh. A special greeting to Jerry in Portlaoise.

THE DORRAN FAMILY, Short Strand, send Christmas greetings to all republican POWs in Irish and English jails. Victory to the blanket men and to the Armagh women!

THE MCCOOL FAMILY, Derry, sends Christmas greetings to all the great Derry 'blanket men'. Hoping that the New Year will bring you victory.

THE ROLAND FAMILY sends Christmas greetings to Tony, Sam, Lawrence, Dermot and Martin and to all the rest of the brave men and women on protest for political status.

THE WARD FAMILY send Christmas greetings to all republican POWs everywhere, especially to the lads in the H-Blocks and to the women in Armagh. God bless you all.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to Paul Mc Glinchey and all-mate Gabriel Corbett (H-5). "They put you in a prison cell cold and damp inside. They handed you

a blanket which you wear with endless pride." From your old friend, Mary T. All my love xxx UTP.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to Arthur Burns, Steve Heughey, Gerald McIntyre, Dominic Quinn, Kevin Campbell and all the prisoners of war in Portlaoise. From Mrs. Hanratty, Dundak.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to Paddy Agnew and all the other Dundak boys, Arthur Morgan, Omesh, and all the POWs in Long Kesh. From Mrs. Hanratty, Dundak.

THE TWINBROOK HUNGER-STRIKE COMMITTEE send Christmas and New Year greetings to all republican prisoners from the Twinbrook area in Long Kesh, Crumlin Road, Armagh, Portlaoise and in jails in England. Your fight is our fight, Victory to the POWs.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to Peader Heany (Portlaoise), Kevin Mallon, Seamus Twomey, Kieran McMorrow, Pat Shanahan, Brendan Duffy, Brian Hearty, Joe Malone, Joe McEale, Brian Keenan, Eddie Butler, Harry Dugan. From Jim, Peader and Margaret Murray (Mayo).

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to all the women in Armagh. From Imelda and Peader Hamill.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to all the boys in Portlaoise. From their Monaghan friends, especially Dermot Cassidy.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to Jack Brady and the rest of the boys. From the fighting O'Reilly family.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to the boys in England's hellholes, H-Blocks and English jails. God bless you all boys. We love you yet, we won't forget the heroes of our land. From your friends and comrades.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to Paul and Padraic (H6) and to Billy (Cage 11). Political status for Irish republican prisoners of war! From Peggy and Liz.

WOMEN AGAINST IMPERIALISM send solidarity greetings to all the political prisoners in Armagh and the H-Blocks, Long Kesh. We support you in your fight for political status.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to the girls in Armagh from Monica, UTP.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to Cyril, Vivian and my other friends in Portlaoise jail. From Lita.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to all the prisoners in British and Irish jails. From the Reid family, Chelmsford, Essex, England.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to all political prisoners at home and abroad. And to Vivian Hayden, Joe Kelly, Mick Fox and Joe Larkin in Portlaoise. From Jim and Theresa Gorry.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to all POWs in Portlaoise. Especially Eugene Sloan, Vivian Hayden, Seamus McCollum, Flair Campbell and Joe Larkin. From Michael, Mairead and Fionnuala Mac Conmara.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to Bobby Sands, Beni and Tom McIlwre, Gerry Bradley, Jim Valente, Kieran Smyth, Sam Dineen, Sid Walsh and all the lads in the H-Blocks and the women in Armagh, especially Rosemary Callaghan. Victory to the political status protest. From Eilish Carlsie.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to all Irish POWs in jails in England. From AL.

CHRISTMAS and solidarity greetings to all republican prisoners in jails in Ireland and England, especially those from the Strabane area. Special greetings to those protesting for political status. May you all emerge victorious! From Susan McGillen.

REVOLUTIONARY CHRISTMAS GREETINGS to my brothers and sisters in the struggle in the H-Blocks, Long Kesh and in Armagh jail. My thoughts and heart are always with you. G.B.

SOLIDARITY GREETINGS this Christmas to all the republican prisoners on protest for political status in H-Blocks of Long Kesh and in Armagh women's prison. May victory come with the New Year. From Margaretta D'Arcy and John Arden, Galway.

A NOVENA OF MASSES have been said for all political prisoners on protest for political status, and those in English and Irish jails. Always remembered by Mrs. Burn.



GARTREE PRISON, LEICESTER

The best of Kathleen

'Legion of the rearguard: the best of Kathleen', by Kathleen Thompson. Produced by Linden Records, 1980.

AFTER the trauma of August '69, which was followed by the Falls curfew in 1970, and the introduction of internment in 1971, there arose within all the lads I associated with, a great feeling of Irish nationalism, which was making such a resurgence in our West Belfast community.

Clubs sprang up all over the city and catered for our new-found nationalism; and the Republican Movement — which carried forward 'a tradition' through thick and thin — naturally dominated these haunts.

One such haunt was the old and disused boys' home beside the river in Milltown, the Felons' Club, and every Sunday night we would be entertained, and entertain ourselves, with singing Irish rebel songs, whilst innocently blowing our security to the Brit patrols who regularly raided the 'illegal' club.

It was in this club, a few years earlier, during a visit based on curiosity, that I first heard Kathleen sing; and that was the night it was

announced that she was to make her first record, although I can't remember what the song was. It was also in this club that several years later I heard an anonymous patron get up and sing 'The Dying Rebel', which we used to call 'My only son was shot in Dublin', because of the chorus.

'The Dying Rebel', which is about an old worried father who goes looking for his son in O'Connell Street after the 1916 Rising, only to discover him to have been one of the rebels, is just one of ten splendid songs on a new LP record (and tape-cassette) entitled 'Legion of the rearguard: the best of Kathleen' by Kathleen Thompson.

Another track is Tommy Makem's 'Four Green Fields', a song which aroused passionate feelings of nationalism and which summed up the bloody history of Ireland under British rule.

'Four Green Fields', was also the name of an LP which Kathleen brought out in the early seventies when she sang in the Flying Column group, and some of the songs on that record appear on this one too.

When listening to Kathleen the receptive listeners will automatically

RECORD REVIEW

BY PAT DUGGAN

find themselves pulled into the tragedy, or joining in the rallying cry. In 'Four Green Fields' one experiences a deep sense of injustice giving rise to a motivation to action. In 'James Connolly' one is pre-occupied with the execution of Connolly and how the masses stood silently in prayer outside of Kilmainham jail.

What must be one of Kathleen's most beautifully sung numbers is 'Only our rivers run free', which is about the seeming impossibility of achieving the freedom which continually evades us.

The record sleeve 'blurb' states that: "Throughout our history the bards and poets of Ireland have been an integral part of the fight for justice and freedom. With their songs and poems they provide solace, comfort and hope for the people of Ireland while complimenting the courage and dedication of our Volunteers."

After the last song 'Roisin Dubh', there is a tribute to Kathleen from Don Sullivan. Kathleen Thompson was an extremely generous person and her death in February 1979 from cancer was a sore loss to the Republican Movement. A long-time member of the National Graves Association, and an indefatigable worker for the Republican political prisoners, Kathleen also worked and donated her talent to the comfort of cancer patients, and it is prisoners' dependants and cancer patients to whom the proceeds of this record will be donated.

The record (also available on tape, both stereo) is available at £4.50 from all the usual record shops plus 51/53 Falls Road, Belfast and 44 Parnell Square, Dublin. Enquiries about bulk orders should be made to either of the above addresses or telephone Belfast 23214.

