



republican NEWS

The Voice of Republican Ulster Vol. 7 No: 2

Saturday, January 15th, 1977

England/Scotland/Wales 10p USA 45cts. PRICE 7p

While former UDR man walks to freedom

TORTURED REPUBLICANS IN MILITARY HOSPITAL

The magnanimous sparing of the life of ex-UDR man, Jim McClean, by the Irish Republican Army in south Armagh last Sunday was in stark contrast to the torture at the hands of the RUC of a young Lurgan man, Edward 'Ned' McCann. While McClean walked home free to Tullyette, Ned McCann was rushed to the casualty ward of Craigavon Hospital from the notorious interrogation block within Lurgan RUC barracks where he had been

arrested in Republican areas of Lurgan, and threatening to carry out reprisals at their homes. Apologists for the RUC were quick to refute the accusations by trotting out the hackneyed denials. Similar 'not guilty' statements were issued by the RUC and the British Government when news of the horrors being perpetrated in Police Barracks began to leak out.

Twenty year old

NED McCANN, WHO WAS TORTURED FOR 120 HOURS BY THE LURGAN SPECIAL BRANCH BEFORE BEING RUSHED TO CRAIGAVON HOSPITAL. HE IS NOW IN THE MILITARY WING OF MUSGRAVE PARK HOSPITAL.



Ned McCann to Musgrave Park Military Hospital where he now lies under heavy guard.

of Republican statements and a more favourable orientation towards the Occupation Forces. One of the Occupation Forces in Ireland is a collaborationist Press.

The Revolutionary People know who the real terrorists are. The Irish Republican Army are honourable the RUC are rats. The Irish Republican Army being of the people understand humanity in the armed struggle. The RUC are uniformed, legalised and unrepentant torturers and killers.

WHOLESALE TORTURE

There is little doubt that the wholesale use of torture in RUC and British Army holding centres has been easy to cover up because of the political bias of the mass media in support of the Government. They have sowed the wind and now complain when Mason demands that they reap the whirlwind he wants complete censorship

TWO TURF LODGE MEN ARE IN SAME HOSPITAL WING

WHEN NED McCANN was admitted to the heavily guarded military wing of Musgrave Hospital, he joined two other young Republicans from Turf Lodge, who were admitted following the shooting of two Brit soldiers in Norglen Parade last week-end. William Chillington and his sixteen year old friend, were among those arrested in a massive follow-up operation by the Brits.

Both were savagely beaten by members of the Welsh Fusiliers and suffered serious injuries to head and body. One eye witness said that the Brits used both men as 'footballs.' Another woman who lived nearby said that the soldiers went berserk - 'they acted like wild men.'

The present behaviour of British soldiers in Belfast would suggest that this is only a matter of time until someone is beaten to death.

The Mirror—the paper that's special in Ireland
KIDNAPPED MAN IS FREED
After he had been freed

tortured for five days.

The incident involving the ex-UDR man was given maximum publicity by the media. Both TV channels broadcasted appeals calling for his release and the Press carried graphic details of his 'ordeal'.

The arrest, torture and hospitalisation of Ned McCann went largely unmentioned by the media. Investigative journalism ended. One right-wing nationalist daily, the IRISH NEWS, carried a brief mention of the McCann arrest under the heading 'Charged at bedside court'.

On Monday, January 10th, the North Armagh Battalion, Oglagh na h-Eireann issued a statement accusing the RUC of torturing people

McCann, from the Shankill estate in Lurgan, was arrested at a road block last Tuesday evening (4th Jan) at 6.00p.m. He was brought to Lurgan barracks where he was publicly stripped naked and given a loose fitting boiler suit to wear.

For the next five days he was subjected to the most inhuman treatment while RUC thugs took turns to interrogate him for 120 hours. Prior to, and on several occasions during interrogation he was forced to do strenuous exercises. This action was taken to ensure that Ned McCann was physically, as well as mentally, exhausted during the grillings. On the second day of his detention Ned was told that a special team of men were coming from Enniskillen to 'talk to him'.

That evening new interrogators appeared and the use of physical

torture increased. A plastic bag was forced over Ned's head causing him to collapse when nearly asphyxiated. He was then revived and questioned again. These torture methods landed Britain in the dock at Strasbourg, her defence was that the techniques had been 'Now Discontinued'.

On Sunday evening Ned was rushed by ambulance to Craigavon Hospital after being examined by an RUC Doctor. He was charged, while partially unconscious with 'murder' and possession of a gun.

From Craigavon he was taken by the RUC to Crumlin Road Jail where the Governor refused to admit him because of his condition. (This is highly significant

in itself, as Governor Truesdale presided over the raids in Long Kesh, the beatings and gassing of the inmates and the murder of Gerard Coney.

The RUC then took

'WE WERE GETTING SUSPICIOUS'

-Americans on 'Peace' tour

Enclosed is a letter sent to us by some of the 107 Americans in Ireland in December on a much-publicised 'Journey of Reconciliation.' This was organised by the 'peace People' while in America.

However, as the enclosed letters reveals at least some of these Americans were deeply disillusioned with the Peace People. Many of these people were of Irish extraction, and came with genuine goodwill towards the people of Ireland. But they were shocked to discover the Peace People quite unconcerned about justice.

One of the Americans, a nun from San Francisco, was told by a priest who visited Derry in September to look up a young couple there: "They'll open your eyes to another side of the situation."

The nun wrote to the couple, who organised a group to meet with the nun and as many of her fellow travellers as wished to come along. Six of them broke away from the main group of Americans, giving up a dinner at a plush hotel to take a fry-up in an ordinary Creggan council house instead.

Up in Creggan, the six met prisoners' relatives, the Magilligan Welfare Committee, ex-prisoners, members of the Republican Movement and ordinary members of the public who had been abused by the BA and RUC. For three hours, the Americans, listened, spellbound learning from the people themselves of grossly unfair trials, relentless and savage house raids, beatings during interrogation attempts to force children to become informers, murders and injuries done to

innocent people by the Forces of Occupation. The six were so impressed by what they were hearing that they stayed well beyond their scheduled departure time, and took the train to Belfast to re-join the rest of the group.

"This afternoon was the highlight of our whole trip," said one American afterwards. "We thought we weren't hearing the whole story." Another stated: "We were getting suspicious of the tour we were getting. We met only middle class and professional people, stayed in only the best hotels. We wanted to meet the ordinary people. Another commented that they were not allowed to get out of their buses while touring the Falls Road in Belfast.

I commented that the weather was bad, anyway, but

this visitor wasn't one bit slow: "The reasons we were not allowed to get out of our buses were political, not climatic, I'm sure." The six said they knew very little about the Irish situation, and were aware of the slanted and heavily censored nature of what news they did get, and that is why they wanted to come "see for themselves."

Back in Belfast, they got in touch with 170a Falls Road and met the Turl Lodge women on Blanket Vigil. "These women told us the same sort of things we heard up in Derry," wrote one in a Christmas card sent to Derry. "We met Fr.

Faul, too, and loaded up on literature. We are so glad we met with you. We would have never known this side of things otherwise.

Up in Creggan, we suggested they ask the "Peace People" one question: "Will there ever be peace in Ireland, under British rule?" Apparently they got no satisfactory answers, for at the much publicised Boyne Peace Rally in Drogheda - the very event they had come from America to attend - 25 Americans in this party of 107 boycotted, in protest against the very one-sided, anti-Republican nature of the "Peace Movement."

The article above, which we had to edit, is from N. Bn. Mhic Ghill 'Aolain who met with the disillusioned Americans. The letter referred to in the copy shows that the delegation was brought to Ireland under wholly dishonest pretences. It is planned to bring some of the group back to Ireland during the coming year for the purpose of acquainting the individuals with the true facts of the situation in the occupied North.

SENSATIONAL BIRTHS IN KESH COMPETITION FOR NAMING OF BIRDS

The pigeons in the study hut (Long Kesh) have led three eggs while Paul Loughran's budgies have led six. Brownie, who has taken a rest this week after his double-bumper articles last issue, has invited REPUBLICAN NEWS readers to submit their choice of names for the new arrivals to "Name the Budgies" c/o Paul Loughran, Cage 11, or to Dickie Gallagher (same address) Entries no later than February 1st, 1977. The lucky winners will receive original drawings, signed by that maestro of the fibre tip, 'Cosmo'. (Remember Van Gough's pictures became priceless after he went mad...that gives 'Cosmo' a headstart.) So come on, if there's someone you hate.....name a budgie after him.



LEON URIS SLAMS BRITISH PRESS

"The British Press coverage of Northern Ireland is so goddam one-sided the British public can't get the picture of both sides," Leon Uris, author of the new best-seller "Trinity," told a Daily Express Journalist (8th October).

"The British troops in Ulster have sided totally with the Protestants and left the Catholics defenceless. Can you wonder that

the I.R.A. which in 1968 was totally dormant, is now organised in every ghetto?"

We haven't read the book yet, but the Daily Express man gives it a good plug when he writes: "Indeed, the innocent reader must conclude we are the source of all Ireland's troubles-past and present."

From "The Provisional" (issued by Mid-Armagh Comhairle Ceantair.)

THE 1977 CALENDAR CARRIES PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE STRUGGLE ON ALL FRONTS.

PRICE : 50p EACH & ARE AVAILABLE FROM:
EIRE NUA BOOKSHOP, 170a Falls Road, Belfast
or THE CRAFT SHOP, 44, Parnell Sq., Dublin 1.

Postage charges for single copies are: Ireland/England/Scotland 11p (Europe 24p); USA 38p and Australia 47p.

RUTHLESSNESS OF BRITS IS EXPOSED

South Down Command of Ogligh na hEireann exposed the latest sinister attempt by the Crown Forces to secure civilian casualties in Newry when they issued a statement on a booby-trap/motor-cycle explosion in the town, last week-end.

Ogligh na hEireann said they gave a warning to the authorities on Thursday that the bomb was planted but no action was taken. A second warning was then given, on the following day, but the Brits continued to ignore the

warnings.

After the bomb went off, a youth was slightly injured. South Down Command of Ogligh said: "It is clear the Crown Forces deliberately disregarded the warnings in the hope that there would be civilian casualties. The aim was to discredit the I.R.A. However, the truth is out in Newry...and the community is not satisfied, beyond doubt, about the ruthlessness of the Brits, in their refusal to act on bomb warnings."

DETAILS OF CROSSMAGLEN OPERATION

The Provisional I.R.A. ambush on a Brit army patrol on the outskirts of Crossmaglen in South Armagh on Sunday week has been described locally as one of the most daring of Ogligh operations in the area since the Brits' spy-post was wiped out in the same locality, 22nd November 1975.

One British Tommy was killed and two others badly injured when the A.S.U. opened up with their weapons on the patrol.

The soldiers were on their way to take up positions outside the local Catholic Church to harass innocent civilians and carry out "identity" checks when the Ogligh unit cut them down.

A second patrol of Brits which was out in the streets of Crossmaglen at the time of the shooting ran back to their base at the R.U.C. station as soon as they heard the firing - they didn't venture near the scene of the attack for nearly a half-hour later.

Minutes after the attack, the Irish Republican Army at Crossmaglen issued a statement in which they claimed responsibility for the shooting and warned that the campaign against Crown Forces in South Armagh would be "intensified during 1977" pending a declaration for a British withdrawal.

Republican Resistance CALENDAR 1977



THE ATTEMPTED MURDER OF GERRY McKERR

We publish below a statement from Provisional Sinn Fein, Lurgan, dated 10th January, 1977:

On Wednesday night last (January 5th), Gerry McKerr was shot at his door in Derrymacash. The first statement on the incident received plenty of coverage from the radio and television and no doubt, anyone listening to the news got the impression that it was a knee-capping job as it was stated that "a man had received gunshot wounds to both thighs." The statement, of course, had been issued by the RUC in an attempt to hide the true facts of the situation.

Gerry McKerr, as most people know, suffered three years of internment in Long Kesh Concentration Camp and was one of the twelve men who received the hooded treatment at the hands of the British Government.

The RUC in their statement tried to make it look as if Ogligh na hEireann were responsible for the shooting.

The facts of the situation are that a loyalist murder gang tried to assassinate Gerry McKerr but fortunately didn't succeed. It was quick thinking by Gerry McKerr that their attempt failed. He managed to grapple with the gunman and slammed the door. Only this saved his life as the gun had been pointed at his head. Two shots were fired through the door injuring him in both thighs.

As is familiar with incidents like this perpetrated by loyalist killer squads the RUC turn a blind eye and issue lying propaganda in an effort to discredit the Republican Movement.

DES WILSON ATTACKS 'PEACE WITHOUT CHANGE'

FATHER DESSIE WILSON, the out-spoken Ballymurphy priest, has accused Church Leaders in Ireland of incompetence and has denounced the 'Peace' Movement for seeking the same thing as the Church Leaders — peace without change.

During an interview on the Radio Eireann programme: 'This Week' — Father Wilson, who described himself as 'blazingly angry', said that theological violence occurred when Church Leaders imposed on people a regime of fear. He said that the recent statement by the Leaders of the four main churches showed a 'level of theological incompetence so low that nothing to match it could be found in any country I know of.'

Father Wilson went on: "I am blazingly angry, when I see people traipsing up streets and over bridges. What they want is peace without change."

Notes From Nowhere 'INDEPENDENT'S' 'KISS OF DEATH'

When the Sunday Independent, Ireland's lowest circulating national Sunday newspaper, entered the new year with the results of its 'Person of the Year' popularity poll, the winner was declared to be the collective leadership of the Peace Movement. Note the phrases 'was declared to be' and 'collective leadership', because there on hangs a tale.

Since Cearbhall O'Daigh's resignation, the Irish Independent, the Sunday Independent's running mate, has been campaigning on behalf of Cosgrave's former Defence Minister, Paddy Done-Again. The daily is edited by Aidan Pender, the former chief of a

rather special unit of the Free State Army. Captain Pender has long believed that the Free State Army had been kept under-manned and under-equipped by successive Defence Ministers. So when Done-Again started to build up the strength of the army, he got the more than enthusiastic support of the Independent. This support remained with Done-Again throughout the recent Presidential resignation crisis.

Naturally there is not inconsiderable overlap in readership between the daily and its Sunday stablemate. So when the Sunday Independent hacks started to count the votes, they realised to their horror that the man

satirical magazine Private Eye once compared winning the Independent's poll to having one's cause adopted by the Daily Telegraph, that well known English patron saint of lost (right-wing) causes.

Panic reigned in Chateau Despair, the Independent's head office in Dublin's Abbey Street until one sober hack had a brilliant idea: Why not lump all the votes for anybody remotely connected with the 'Peace' movement together and add the total as going to the collective leadership of the peace movement?

No sooner said than done, as they say in a certain bar at the corner of Abbey Street. So it came to pass that on the morning that the Foreign



STERN ACTION TAKEN AGAINST CRIME RING IN BELFAST

INTELLIGENCE UNITS have initiated action in all four Battalion areas within the Belfast Brigade, against the organised groups of gangsters who have been using the war as a means to line their pockets. Volunteers have swooped on many houses during the past week where stolen goods were on sale. An elaborate black market, in which 'fences' have made large sums of money, has been effectively smashed. The Belfast Brigade are intent on putting the 'Fagins' who grow rich on spoils stolen from small shop-keepers out of business.

Despite repeated warnings the men and women behind the ring of crime in the Nationalist areas of Belfast, continued to operate the crime ring.

In a statement from Ogligh na hEireann in Belfast it was made clear that the time for warnings was over. Anyone in future caught engaging in gangsterism, in which children are exploited, cannot expect to get off lightly.

THEY WILL DIE WITH THE SYSTEM

Myles Humphries, chairman of the RUC Police Authority told Roy Mason's second in command, James Dunne, that the overall objective of the authority was to make the RUC "one of the most modern and best equipped police services in the world".

Humphries went on to outline plans to enlarge the RUC and was emphatic that the Orange militia were "well armed". The people of the Falls and the Bogside will readily testify to the sectarian, brutal attitude which is

deeply ingrained in the ranks of the RUC.

No amount of double talk can disguise the fact that the RUC are, and always have been, the military wing of the most right wing brands of Unionism. Memories of little Patrick Rooney and Sam Devaney are all too clear. The bullet pocked walls of St. Comgall's school and Divis flats are testimony to what the Orange militia stand for. The RUC will eventually die with the system which created it.

most likely to succeed was none other than Paddy Done-Again.

Now ever since Captain Terence O'Neill's selection as the Independent's Man of the Year for 1969 was announced on the morning after Burntollett (while the people of Bogside were still picking up the pieces after the previous night's rampage by the peace-loving RUC) winning the Independent's award has been considered the kiss-of-death in political circles. Indeed, an article written for the London

Office's favourite newspaper 'The Observer' broke the news to its world-wide Anglophile middle-class readership that, as they put it, the leaders of the Peace movement 'are viewed in the Catholic ghettos with increasing cynicism if not downright detestation'. The Sunday Independent was proclaiming them as top of their pops.

No wonder the Independent, despite some excellent reporters, is the least popular of the three Irish Sunday newspapers.



BRUTALITY IN BRITISH AND

THE CONDITIONS IN ENGLISH JAILS FOR IRISH PRISONERS OF WAR, HAVE BEEN DOCUMENTED IN HUGH FEENEY'S FINE BOOKLET, 'IN CARE OF HER MAJESTY'S PRISONS'. THE ARTICLE ON THIS PAGE IS FROM THE IRISH REPUBLICAN INFORMATION SERVICE AND GIVES FURTHER DISTURBING DETAILS OF WHAT LIFE IS LIKE IN THE DUNGEON THAT IS PORTLAOISE.

The reported readiness of the Free State's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Fitzgerald, to approach the British authorities over the treatment of Irish prisoners in English jails was criticised last week by Mr. Frank Maguire, the independent Westminster M.P. for Fermanagh-South Tyrone.

Mr. Maguire accused Dr. Fitzgerald of double standards, saying that conditions in Irish prisons, especially at Port Laoise, were equally deserving of official investigation. The Fermanagh-South Tyrone M.P. revealed that he recently had a final rejection from the Port Laoise prison governor of his request to visit the jail, where seven of his constituents from the North are currently being held. He commented: 'Port Laoise must be the only prison in the whole of these two islands to have refused me permission for a visit and I can only ask myself what is there to hide.'

Mr. Maguire said his rejection came from the governor, not from Government sources, and had followed an earlier request for the MP to send two photographs of himself. The reason for the final rejection, he was told, was that none of the seven constituents were related to him. He said that he was so incensed at this refusal that he checked with the British Home Office and had established that the British Ambassador in Dublin would be allowed to visit the M.P. constituents in Port Laoise which he deemed a peculiar state of affairs as he would not be allowed such a visit himself. Mr. Maguire, in the meantime, will continue to analyse the treatment of Irish political prisoners in England and protest against the inhuman conditions and torture in jails there. He will insist that an inquiry should be held into incidents at Albany Prison on the Isle of Wight, where last September five Irish prisoners received physical injury. These incidents also formed a large part of a recent newspaper article by Alastair Logan, a solicitor practising in Guil-

tord about what he considered to be the maltreatment of Irish prisoners on the grounds of their nationality and their politics.

HOME OFFICE DEFINITION OF POLITICAL STATUS

Con McFadden is an Irish political prisoner serving a 20 year sentence in Albany Jail. Currently he is spending three months in solitary confinement and has lost two years remission as a punishment for allowing himself to be attacked and beaten by warders.

Two weeks before Christmas, his father, who had been ill, died. Needless to say, his attending the funeral was never considered. He asked the prison to let his girl friend know so that he could have a compassionate visit. Not only did they not do that, the prison phoned his girl friend and told her that she could not visit at all that week as planned, but would have to come the following week. No mention was made of the bereavement.

Con McFadden was then given the impression that his girl friend could not care less about his situation until, a whole week later, she was able to visit him. Only then she learned of his father's death. The officer on duty at the visit denied all knowledge of the telephone call.

This incident is a small indication of the depths to which the British prison authorities are prepared to stoop to harass and victimise Irish political prisoners. In this case, of course, the harassment comes on top of the beating which Con McFadden got in Albany in September and of which he still shows marks one month later. At that time, too, following the beatings, the prison refused to allow him any visits to allow the bruising a chance to disappear. The authorities in Albany have now admitted that only two officers, not 19 as published, were injured in an incident in which six Irish prisoners were so badly injured they had to have hospital treatment.

Once again, the British Home Office has demon-

strated its own peculiar definition of 'political status' beatings, harassment, intimidation, vicious punishments from kangaroo courts, attacks on families and visitors, and if all else fails and the prisoners insist on speaking out, their ultimate threat: that you will be found 'dead in the cell'.

A Scottish solicitor, Mr. Alastair Logan, has published in the 'Law Guardian', the journal of the Law Society in London, what can only be described as a well-researched and documented indictment of the treatment of Irish political prisoners who are serving sentences in British jails. Two factors, says Mr. Logan, prompted him to produce his article.

'Firstly, because solicitors have very little contact with their clients once they go inside a prison after conviction, no matter what may happen to them there, and, second, because it takes the Home Office at least eight weeks to make any response to a solicitor's inquiry, and then the reply seems designed only to frustrate the original complaint which only makes matters worse,' Mr. Logan said.

He feels this deeply. 'The Home Office procedure on these complaints about Irish prisoners is an appalling situation in a democratic society. Nothing in the British system of law gives the authorities the right to prevent convicted prisoners from getting legal guidance and, indeed, the protection of the law'.

ALARMED OVER LACK OF ACCESS

Much of the information contained in Mr. Logan's article was brought to his attention by other solicitors who were becoming alarmed over the lack of access to their clients and the treatment they are receiving in jail. Mr. Logan said:

'I wanted to open up this issue for public debate. This particular category of prisoner, when you analyse it, represented only one-fifth of one per cent of the

prison population in British jails, which means bluntly that an awful lot of things are happening to a very small group. If their treatment was spread over the whole spectrum of 42,000 prisoners, there would be a liberal outcry in this land the likes of which would be unprecedented'.

On the question of publicity in the English newspapers which surrounds pre-trial appearances of people charged with political offences, Mr. Logan says 'The massive publicity that has generally surrounded pre-trial appearances of people charged with "terrorist" offences together with the well-publicised precautions taken by the

police and in one case the Army, which include references to snipers on roofs and heavily armed escorts, appearing in all the national daily newspapers can only have a prejudicial affect in the minds of the average reader and it would be difficult to conceive that any jury subsequently empanelled to try such individuals could fail to have been impressed by the well-advertised security precautions'.

As an example of this, Mr. Logan cites the trial of Noel Gibson, Paul Murray, Brendan O'Dowd, Stephen Nordone and Sean Kinsella (the Liverpool Five). He said that in this case clear medical evidence was available

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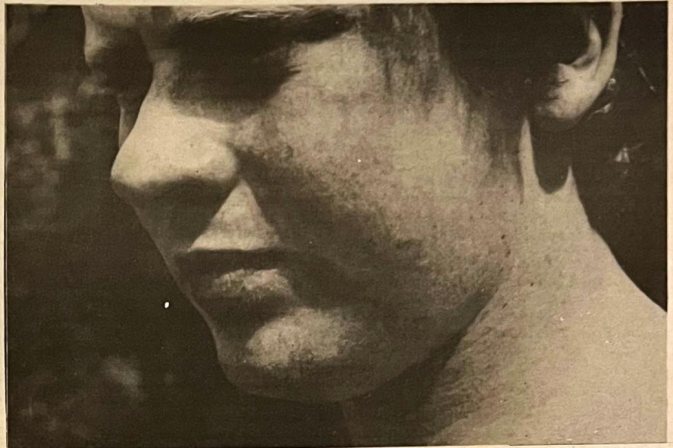
D IRISH JAILS

that all the defendants had received treatment for injuries received whilst in police custody. This information was available to their legal advisors. However, as the defendants discarded their representation because they felt that the court was incompetent to try them for the offences and because there was no apparent obligation on the prosecution to bring these matters to the attention of the court, no mention was made in the trial of the fact that they had received these injuries and its possible relevance on any statements they may have made. The Consultant Surgeon at Walton Hospital, Liverpool, said in relation to one

of them (O'Dowd)... 'brought here under guard with a police story that he had been involved in a fight was drowsy and practically unconscious had two black eyes and a broken nose and a broken jaw bleeding from the nose and mouth had an enlarged bladder body was so extensively bruised'.

In relation to Gibson, the Senior House Officer at the Manchester Royal Infirmary reported 'he had injuries consistent with being kicked in the face and back and loins lumps on the head left black eye and broken nose damaged lower ribs(8-10) a bruised stomach grazes on the backs of hands'.

Sean Moore, from the Clonard area of Belfast, was brutally beaten up last week when the Prison Warders in the Crumlin Road Jail forced him into the exercise yard of the prison along with five Loyalists, members of para-military assassination gangs. After being beaten by the Loyalist prisoners Sean was again beaten by the Screws and then charged with a fabricated offence.



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The article also criticised the treatment of visitors at British jails saying that families of prisoners should not be penalised at the same time as the individual himself. 'Yet (he said) grave difficulties have been placed in the way of families of prisoners wishing to visit their relatives in prison. With the exception of the Price Sisters, Kelly and Feeney (who are the only Republican prisoners to have been transferred to serve their sentences in Northern Ireland for reasons which, I suspect, have more to do with the embarrassment in which the Government was placed as a result of those four going on hunger strike, force feeding and the death of Michael Gaughan, than it had to do with humanitarian considerations) all Republican prisoners are serving their sentences in this country putting a great distance between themselves and members of their families. This is despite the fact that prisoners are entitled to apply for transfer at any time after sentence and the criteria applied are the same for all prisoners and include security, compassionate or other considerations' (written reply to Parliamentary Question: 26 February 1976).

The tragic deaths in British prisons of Michael Gaughan, Frank Stagg and Noel Jenkinson have drawn some attention to the way prisoners are being treated. It was in protest at the treatment of his family that Frank Stagg went on two hunger strikes and finally refused to accept visits when the authorities threatened to strip-search his wife and sister. Such protests were punished with solitary confinement and

loss of remission. Of all the hardships that Irish political prisoners must suffer, that of watching their families being ill-treated is the most unbearable. Still, instances of physical attacks on prisoners by British prison officers are getting more and more frequent. The acquittal last year of fourteen Prison Officers from Winson Green Jail, Birmingham on ninety-four counts of alleged brutality against Political Prisoners has no doubt been seen by Prison Officers throughout all English jails as a green light allowing them to be as brutal as they wish towards Irish prisoners.

NAKED AND IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

A few weeks ago two young Derry Republicans were sentenced by a Diplock Special Court to 16 years imprisonment each. Their 'offences' were possessing weapons and being members of the I.R.A. Because their charges related to an incident after March 1st the deadline set by Mr. Merlyn Rees while he was Secretary of State for the six counties for the ending of political status, these two men knew that they were going to be denied 'Special Category'. In forthright and determined statements from the dock they informed the 'court' that they were, regardless of what the British said, political prisoners and as such they intended refusing to wear prison garb and do prison work.

As a result of their decision they joined the other Republican POWs in Long Kesh Camp who, because of their insistence on being treated as political prisoners and not criminals, are being kept

at this moment in solitary confinement, naked except for a blanket.

PORT LAOISE PRISON

Prisoners in Port Laoise prison were given no mail from their relatives from late November to Christmas. This was an extremely cruel and inhuman punishment for families of prisoners during the season of good will. The attitude of the government in the South to the political prisoners seems to be growing even more vindictive.

NO FAMILY VISITS TO PORT LAOISE

Here is the description of a visit of one father to his son:

'I visited my son in Port Laoise Prison on November 20th. The visit lasted twenty minutes. The warden in charge (who, incidentally, is locked in a 'cage') insisted that we stand within two feet of him. He was equipped with a notebook on which he took notes of our conversation. Another warden obviously embarrassed, was compelled to stand immediately behind my son for the duration of the 'visit'. This is standard practice. Add to that, that you view the prisoner through two grilles of close mesh and two strips of dirty perspex and you have some measure of the intensity of malevolence which pervades the very atmosphere in this place created in the mind of Patrick Cooney, Minister for Justice(?)'.

There is no question of family visits in the true sense. Visitors must apply individually to the governor, they must supply a photograph of themselves plus other ident-

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ANTI CIVILIAN CAMPAIGN CONTINUES TO ESCALATE IN NORTH BELFAST

The reign of British Army terror continues in all areas of the North. Belfast has seen a dramatic upsurge in repression since Roy Mason's arrival at the NIO last September. The report, below, has been compiled in ONE area of the North Belfast and illustrates the nature of the escalating anti-civilian campaign which is complimentary to the 'depoliticisation' policy.

ALL OUT ASSAULT

In the days following Christmas an all out assault was made, by the Brits, on the Ardoyne area. A young man was hauled off to the North Queen Street fortress after being arrested for refusing to give his name to a Brit. The man had already given details to another Brit, the leader of the patrol. Last Tuesday a huge force of Brits, backed up by heavy armour, swooped on Kerrera Street and began ransacking houses. Houses in Chatham Street and Elmfield Street were also raided in the operation. Two locals were arrested and spent some 18 hours under intensive interrogation before being released.

One woman said that the presence of the Brits in Ardoyne was 'really heavy on the ground' and described their behaviour as 'disgusting.'

On Wednesday last a young man was pulled from his home in Jamaica Street and held for 56 hours before being released. The following day a raid was carried out on the Sinn Fein Advice Centre and copies of the booklet 'British Army Terror' by Fathers Brady, Murray and Faul, along with copies of the Troops Out bulletin were stolen.

A young woman from Brompton Park was arrested while visiting a friend's house and held at North Queen Street for 48 hours.

UNITY RAID

At 11.30 pm on Friday last, a large contingent of heavily armed Brits raided the Unity Social Centre and declared martial law by refusing access or exit to the locals. Attempts were made to 'screen' everyone in the Club but the operation had to be called off after 20 minutes when local people began to resist.



FERMANAGH OPERATIONS

The campaign of economic sabotage, which has had such a telling effect on the British economy, chalked up more successes in Fermanagh. In several bomb attacks adequate warnings were given enabling the area to be cleared, no one was injured in any of the actions.

The British Customs Post at Mullan, Co. Fermanagh was totally destroyed in a fire bomb attack.

In other operations the railway line between Duncannon and Lurgan was closed overnight when reports of mines on the track were received.

THE DECAYING EMPIRE

The British Empire is no more. The nucleus exists but its extremities have been amputated and the disease of liberty (disease that is, to colonialism) is spreading through its main arteries. The 'English' have in the past two decades witnessed their Empire in its death throes, and are themselves suffering the agony of withdrawal symptoms as their sources of cheap raw materials dry up. The once prosperous English now face austerity unknown in England except in times of war. Why?

The main reason for this lies with the 'Moguls', the owners of the 'International Conglomerates,' men of no Nationality, no honour, no conscience, men motivated by profit.

As the stench emanating from the decaying Empire permeated the board rooms of the 'Moguls' they (the Moguls) immediately began to dismantle their organisations within the British Isles, creating panic among the politicians as the superstructure of the British economy began to collapse causing speculators (the leeches of society) to strive like carrion for the best position from which to pick clean the bones of the corpse.

The Consequences:

The first to suffer, as always, will be the people left in the wake of these parasites. (Francis Fannon had a name for those sufferers, The Wretched of the Earth. In this context not only are they the 'colonial slaves' but also the working classes in Britain.)

Unemployment is rife as International Interests are withdrawn and other sources of employment are being brought to their knees as speculators cash in on the chaos. Destitution will be widespread and hunger eminent as the remains of the Empire embark as transition period from being a bastion of wealth to being poor relation in the power 'bloc' Europe, within which England will be the extremity.

However, the working classes will not be the only ones to suffer, the small investor and the petty bourgeoisie will bear the brunt of losses as regards investments. Many will be left penniless as share prices collapse and small businesses go to the wall. This will be felt relatively throughout the upper strata of society, but the suffering will take place among those without reserves to tide them over the depression. Prevention:

Surgery, no matter how advanced will not save England, the disease there is a terminal one. In the case of the re-emerging Nations e.g. Ireland, Scotland, Wales, there is still time for a form of inoculation which can inhibit the growth of such malignant tumours. As emerging Nations they can prohibit the type of exploitation now fleeing their older neighbours by forbidding the manipulation of their people by the 'Moguls, Foreign or local before they can gain a strangle hold on the economy. Centralisation is the weapon of the Moguls, if they control the nucleus of the

administration nothing will shift them until they have drained the wealth (both in raw materials and labour power.) Of the Nation. They will use the economics as a form of blackmail to ensure that they achieve the best possible profit margins, and psychological intimidation to ensure the co operation of the workers. If these fail they have been known to resort to physical violence using the police and other 'law enforcement agencies' to protect 'their' properties.

article by

SEAN FRIARS, Long Kesh.

The utilisation of a Nations wealth must be for the benefit of that Nations people as a whole. The control of a Nations lands must be in the hands of that Nations people in such a way that it is to the benefit that Nations people as a whole. The laws of a Nation must provide equality of justice for that Nations people in the spirit, as well as the letter of the law. No one should be unable to receive justice because they can't afford it.

MORE TORTURE

Information has come to hand of further torture tactics being used by the R.U.C. Special Branch in the South Armagh and South Down region.

Some details are emerging of a plan to hang a prisoner recently - and make it appear as a 'suicide' unless the prisoner signed a 'confession' of alleged involvement in sectarian attacks. Senior British army officers are also known to have co-operated in the plan.

A MEMORIAL FUND HAS BEEN SET UP WITH THE PRIME AIM OF ERECTING A MONUMENT TO THE MEMORY OF GALLANT MAIRE DRUMM, SO BRUTALLY SLAIN LAST YEAR. ALL DONATIONS WILL BE GRATEFULLY RECEIVED BY THE TREASURER, NATIONAL GRAVES ASSOCIATION, OR TO MRS. MARIE MOORE, 65, FALLS ROAD, BELFAST. ALL CONTRIBUTIONS OVER £5.00 SHALL BE ACKNOWLEDGED, IF THE DONOR WISHES.

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

Political commentators have been grudgingly acknowledging, however indirectly, that the political initiative for 1977 lies with the Provos. The embarrassed confusion of 'establishment' politicians, and the British government, is in direct contrast to the positiveness of present Republican strategy, based on the conception of the 'People's Assemblies'-power to the people. 1977 must be the year of consolidation and politicisation with in the Nationalist ghetto areas, the year when the 'People's Assemblies' become a functioning reality. This political development has now assumed an even greater sense of urgency in the face of the British government's negative declaration of intent, the vacillation of reactionary 'Loyalist' politics, and the growing threat of Free State fascism.

When British military withdrawal becomes a 'reality' it is crucial that the Republican Movement should have secured, within the Nationalist ghetto of the North, (in particular), a militant organised politicised and armed working-class base, capable of political and military resistance against the many shades of fascism in both the North and the South of the country. The potential for a similar base in the deprived working-class areas of the South has been publicly acknowledged, (by a shady group under the auspices of the Free State 'government'), and must be exploited to the full. Once this base has been secured, the Republican Movement can feel confident that the

Indicator



Nationalist section of the working-class, at least, will not be open to the political exploitation of aspiring bourgeois politicians or the lure of false promises from middle-class businessmen, but will ensure that effective political control rests with the ordinary people.

It is important that the people be educated, (in the broadest sense of the word), into the future class struggle, and not simply absorbed into it. Their conviction must be deeprooted, founded on a positive class-consciousness.

On the basis of Republican and Socialist principles the Movement is obligated to make the effort to heal the sectarian division of the artificial working-class in the occupied North. This

attempt must be made openly and publicly so that confusion among the Nationalist section of the working-class does not result. An attempt must be made to secure an alliance of both sections of the working-class, and the positive role, which the Protestant section of the working-class can secure for itself in the New Ireland, spelt out clearly. The rejection of working-class unity and political progression must be seen to be the responsibility of others outside the Republican Movement. In the event of such a rejection, with 'Loyalist' fascism manifesting itself more distinctly, the Nationalist section of the working-class must be in a position not only to defend itself adequately, but to totally eliminate the potential of such a threat once and for all.

Similarly the Movement is also obligated to expose the exaltation of Free State fascism and its military consolidation. This is best illustrated by the re-organisation of the Free State Army (political Promotion) its new equipment (designed specifically for internal use) its re-deployment, (as an auxiliary force to the British Army), and its new civilian powers of arrest and detention. The Free State Government's objective has been to combat the threat from within, namely the Republican Movement, and the more militant section of the working-class in the Free State.

There will be no compromise with the 'establishment' of the Free State who will seek the liquidation of the Republican Movement and its supporters. There are many important lessons which the Republican Movement can learn from the events in Chile in 1973. As was the case then the 'Armed Forces' will not remain neutral, but will be used to defend the 'state', (with all the militarist implications which this entails).

The road ahead is not an easy one, but the Republican Movement can make things a little easier by organising the people-NOW. The vehicle for this organisation should be the 'People's Assemblies'. As individual members of the movement know, through local 'contacts', the process of decolonisation has already begun.

Once the British war machine has ground to a halt, the engine of the Free State war machine will start revving.

PAUL HOLMES

HORROR STORY IN GARTREE JAIL

Paul Holmes was lifted and interned on the Maldstone in Dec. 71. he was later transferred to Long Kesh and held for 13 months. After 8 weeks freedom he was arrested in March 1973 and charged with the London car bombings. During the time of awaiting trial he like his comrades were held in solitary confinement. He was sentenced to life and taken to Bristol then Albany then Parkhurst Prison on the Isle of Wight where they continued to keep him in solitary and conditions were so intolerable he went on hunger strike to draw attention to his plight.

Although he suffered from a serious heart complaint after 6 days he lapsed into a coma for 2 days. His condition was so near death an Phobacht gave it headlines in an issue of 1974, appealing to everyone to use whatever means that was at their disposal to intercede for him. Fortunately he did not pay the extreme sacrifice no thanks to the British Home Office. He was later transferred to Gartree Prison, but like all the other Irish prisoners his torturous treatment was not allowed to

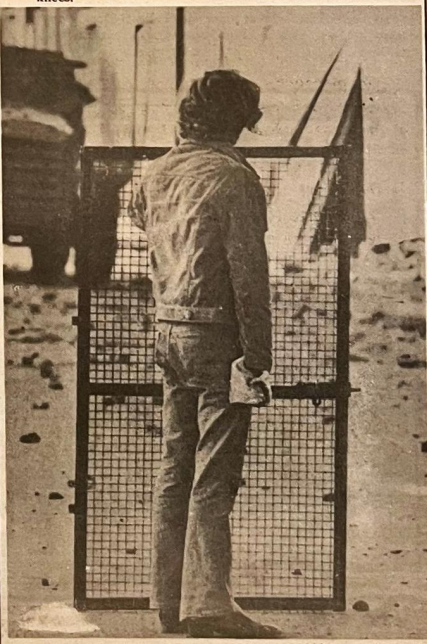
relax. He was constantly stripped and abused, verbally and physically, even night time offered him no repose or refuge from their torment. They tried every humiliating tactic their warped minds could conjure to break his noble spirit, but without success, as events will show.

Despite all the degrading punishment, he was receiving more than enough to break a lesser man. Unselfishly he went to the aid of another Irish man who was being ill treated. For this he was sentenced by the governor to 161 days solitary confinement and all its deprivations. Now he is locked in his cell 23 hours a day, his cell is stripped in the morning of all bedding; he is not allowed a radio or newspapers and he is not allowed to talk to any other prisoner.

England with all her hypocrisy highlights foreign countries' ill treatment of political prisoners and shows no shame in offering political asylum to other countries' refugees, whilst deliberately torturing Irish prisoners in her own country. We urge you to support all petitions and demands to have them returned to Ireland.

DEFIANCE

Throughout the past seven years, and especially since the beginning of the struggle for national liberation, the youth of Belfast have excelled themselves by their bravery and steadfastness. Taking the example set by the Volunteer soldiers of Oglagh na hEireann the young men and women of the occupied Counties have helped bring Britain to her knees.



ANOTHER BREACH

Damage, estimated at £150,000, was caused during a fire bomb attack on Austins of the Diamond, Derry. Despite unprecedented British 'security' the Volunteer soldiers of the Derry Brigade continue to breach the defences.

LITERATURE

A wide range of revolutionary and Irish cultural literature is now available at the Art Shop, An Siopa Ealaíne, 65 Falls Road. (Beside the former Celtic Bar) There is a welcome for anyone who wants to call in and browse around.

BRUTALITY IN BRITISH AND IRISH JAILS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE FIVE

ification. This may take many weeks before they receive a reply and in the meantime they may be subjected to visits and inquiries by the Special Branch.

Patrick Stagg, a nephew of Frank Stagg who died on hunger strike last year because of his treatment in a British jail, was arrested on Friday, September 10th last. His father, since appointed Chairman of the Irish Civil Rights Association, was refused a visit to his son on the following day. On Monday 13th, the mother was told by the Port Laoise authorities that no visit could be granted to her unless she wrote a letter requesting one. She did so and on the following day

(Tuesday 14th) she travelled to Port Laoise in order to be there early on Wednesday morning in order to see her son. She failed to gain admission throughout Wednesday, even after producing her passport as identification and returned home discouraged and distraught.

For twelve days a mother and father failed to see their son, a remand prisoner, and had no idea what condition he was in medically or otherwise. A letter was received by the mother from her son during that time. Written on the 14th and postmarked 17th it had eight lines completely blacked out by the prison censor and stamped by him. This left the minimum of information

regarding the prisoner's well being.

Similar hardships are being endured by the families of other prisoners, some of whom are almost totally isolated from the outside world. The Minister for Justice, Mr. Cooney, continues to harass not only the prisoners in Port Laoise but their families and relatives as well. Visitors have to wait outside the prison gates, sometimes for hours, in all weathers before being called in, two at a time, to be searched before being permitted entry to the waiting room. They are again humiliated by searchers before entering the visiting room.

The Minister for Justice states that these restrictions are necessary in

order to provide adequate supervision of visits. Visits in Port Laoise Jail have always been supervised. Visitors allow no physical contact whatever—not even finger tips can touch—between visitor and prisoner. Between the prisoner and the relative is a double grille rising from table to ceiling. There is a gap of two feet (23 mtrs.) between the grilles. Warders listen to the conversation, ready to stop the visit at a moment's notice. In recent weeks many visits have been suddenly terminated.

Visits are under such restrictions as to make it a hardship for the men's families to visit. Relatives are restricted to 30 visits for almost 200 prisoners (altogether) on Saturday.



This is the only day when the majority of people can travel to the prison to visit their husbands and sons. The Minister for Justice, Mr. Cooney, has made a statement in which he admits that Saturday is the day when the majority of people call to visit their relatives. He knows that public transport will not get these people to Port Laoise in time for visits—which is why some people from some areas have banded together to hire their own transport. But because of the restrictions on visits, even if they do get there on time, the journey is often in vain and have to leave again without seeing their relatives. This is particularly heart-breaking when children are not allowed in to see their fathers after often travelling from as far away as Belfast.

Every Saturday visitors are turned away because the quota of 30 has been filled. In many cases people with children have waited for 3 to 4 hours outside the prison gate only to be turned away or to have a visit ended after only a few moments because the prisoner they were visiting said he or someone had been beaten by warders. Can you imagine the terrible effects all this has on young children.

STRIPS CONTINUE

MASON TOLD PRESSMEN 'I'LL HAVE THE LOT OF YOU'

Roy Mason's outburst at the Culloden Hotel is in keeping with his overall attitude towards the war in Ireland. An arrogant little man whose frustration at never having served one day in the British army while being in the position to dictate army policy has led to military paranoia. Mason had asked, in his usual arrogant manner, that the media should declare a three month blackout on all news from the war zone. One of the guests present asked Mason: 'Does this mean that if the IRA assassinated you tomorrow, we shouldn't report it?' Mason replied, before storming out, 'That is exactly what I mean....if any of this ever gets in the papers I'll have the lot of you.' At that point the commander of the Brit forces in the six Counties, Major General David Young, jumped up to join in the attack on the BBC for refusing to print certain BA hand-outs. It is thought that Young was referring to the incident in which little Brian Stewart was murdered when hit at point blank range by a rubber bullet. The official army line, that a crowd of '700' were stoning the Brits at the time of the incident was proven to be a blatant lie when a BBC camera team visited the area shortly after the incident and talked to local people who had eye-witnessed the shooting. The camera also scanned the ground proving that no stones had been thrown in the area.

It has not been confirmed that a new wing in the H-Block, Long Kesh, has been fitted with cells containing typewriters in anticipation of Roy Mason interning all unsympathetic reporters who make the terrible mistake of printing the truth.

Mail Diary

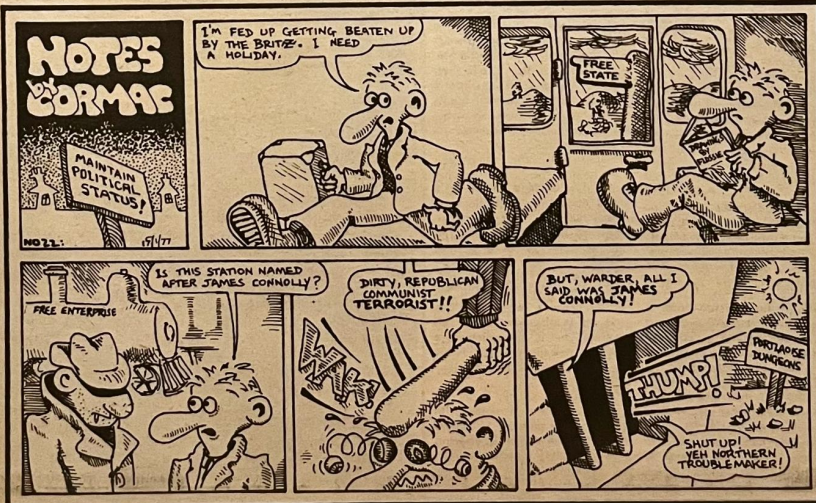
THE PAGE OF REVELATION

Roy Mason



Mason and Belfast troops: 'A Tirade.'

v. the BBC in the Battle of Belfast...



At the moment the prisoners are allowed out of their cells for only one and a half hours per day. The strips continue and in addition the prisoners are strip searched before and after each visit. Refusal to incur solitary confinement. Many prisoners endure solitary confinement at some stage of their sentence. The penalty is inflicted by the prison governor for very minor infringements of rules.

The Department of Justice acknowledged that the warders use force to enforce these searches. This force has resulted in prisoners being injured. But as visits are suspended at the mention of prison happenings, the evidence of these searches are hidden from the public.