

# The CAPTIVE VOICE



**An Glór Gafa**

Vol. 2. No. 3

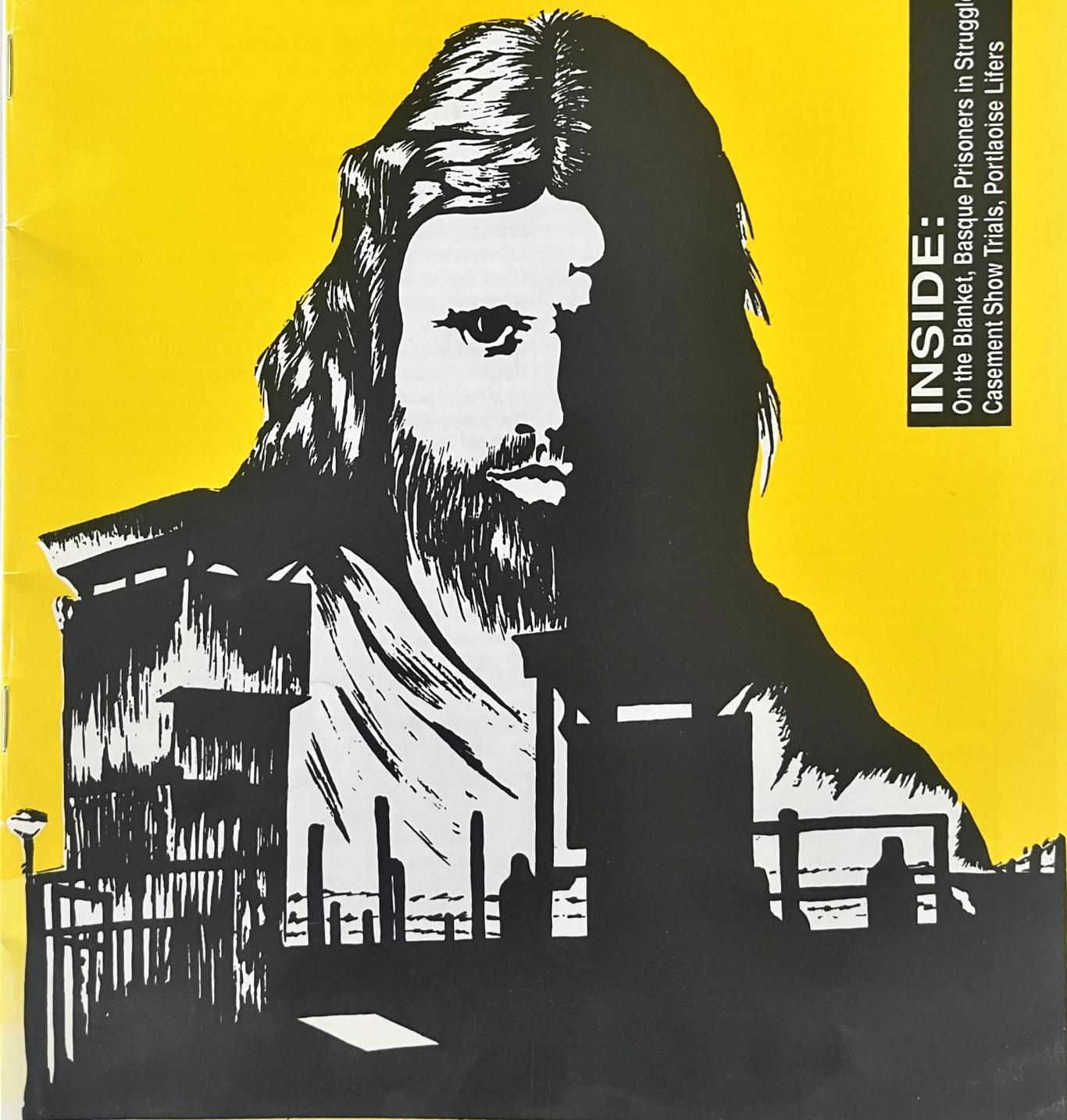
Winter 1990

£1/\$5

The Voice of the Irish Republican Prisoners of War

**INSIDE:**

On the Blanket, Basque Prisoners in Struggle  
Casement Show Trials, Portlaoise Lifers



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## Cover illustration: *Blanketman*

By Tommy Molloy (Long Kesh)

**Correction:** The cover illustration on the Summer 1990 edition, 'Woman in Cell', should have been attributed not only to Paul Doherty but also to Bobby Brown (Long Kesh). Apologies for the omission.

## ELLIS LATEST

ON WEDNESDAY, November 14th, the Dublin Supreme Court unanimously ruled that Dessie Ellis should be extradited to Britain. An RAF jet had been waiting at the Casement Military Aerodrome at Baldonnel since early that morning in anticipation of the rejection of Dessie's final appeal.

Almost immediately after the verdict had been delivered and before members of his family could get from the court to say their goodbyes, Dessie Ellis, then on the 36th day of his hunger-strike, was taken by stretcher to a waiting helicopter and was flown the short distance to Baldonnel. Once there, no time was wasted in the 26-County establishment's unseemly haste to extradite the weakening Dublin man.

He made a short appearance in Bow Street Magistrate's Court later that evening, when he was remanded in custody for a week. The short hearing ended abruptly when the magistrate walked out,

dismissing Dessie's solicitor, Gareth Peirce, who was still complaining that the prisoner had been asked to walk up two flights of stairs to be finger-printed and photographed before the protests of his lawyer made the police desist. Dessie appeared in court in a wheelchair. He was charged with possession of explosives and conspiracy to cause explosions in England between January 1st 1981 and October 27th 1983. Despite the 26-County Attorney General allowing extradition warrants to be served on Ellis "having satisfied himself that there was evidence there for a case to be answered", the British admitted in court that the book of evidence was still not ready.

The following day, following consultations with his father and his solicitor, Dessie made the decision to end his hunger-strike. He is determined now to expose, before the world's media, the hypocrisy of the British legal system and the blatant miscarriage of justice which will be necessary to secure his conviction.

# The CAPTIVE VOICE

## An Glór Gafa

*The Captive Voice/An Glór Gafa* is a quarterly magazine written in its entirety by Irish Republican POWs currently being held in Ireland, England, Europe and the US. It is published by Sinn Fein's POW Department.

Irish Republicans have always recognised that resistance to British misrule does not end upon their arrest. The battles to be fought and the tactics to be employed may change but the enemy remains the same. In the words of our comrade Bobby Sands:

*"The jails are engineered to crush the political identity of the captured Republican prisoner, to crush his/her resistance and transform him/her into a systemised answering-machine with a large criminal tag stamped by oppression upon his/her back, to be duly released on to the street, politically cured — politically barren — and permanently broken in spirit."*

The establishment of this jail journal is a tribute not only to our families, friends and comrades, whose strength and support have been inspi-

rationally to us all, but also is a clear recognition that we are what we are — political prisoners, unbroken in our deep-rooted desire for freedom.

*The Captive Voice* affords us a platform and an opportunity to present in print our views on those topics and issues which affect daily life both inside and outside of the jails. The magazine contains political analyses of current national and international affairs, culture, short stories, poetry and the latest updates on prison-related campaigns and issues. Satire and humour can also be found within the special features, cartoons and artwork illustrations.

We have been pleased and greatly encouraged by the response to the first four editions. It is hoped that the sharing of our feelings and experiences through the pages of *An Glór Gafa* will be both beneficial and enjoyable for all our readers.

We are determined that our message and our *Captive Voice* shall be heard by many.

— The Irish Republican  
Prisoners of War ■

Make sure that you 'hear' *The Captive Voice* each quarter by taking out a subscription.

Subscription rates for four issues are:

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Elsewhere..... £8.

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Send details to:

**The POW Department,**

51/55 Falls Road, Belfast. or 5 Blessington Street, Dublin.

Tel: 249975. Fax: 231723.

Tel: 308664.

### USA & CANADA

Readers in the USA & Canada can now obtain *The Captive Voice/An Glór Gafa* direct from the Irish Northern Aid Committee in New York. Price \$5 each; four-issue subscription \$20.

Send details to: **An Glór Gafa, c/o INAC National Office, 4951 Broadway, New York 10034. Tel: (212) 567-0707.**

The

# CAPTIVE VOICE



An Glór Gafa

On October 27th, 1980, seven men went on hunger-strike in Long Kesh in a bid to win five demands which would have afforded human dignity for themselves and their comrades. It was, more fundamentally, the culmination of a battle to resist the criminalisation of the national liberation struggle. The three-pronged British strategy of Criminalisation, Ulsterisation and Normalisation has constantly been met by Republican resistance, particularly within the gaols where the POWs have forced the British to accept that they will never be labelled as criminals. But the policy continues, most notably through the courts where political activists are extradited to a thoroughly discredited judicial system to face charges which are clearly political. The British also attempt to criminalise whole communities when they defend themselves, as with the 39 people charged following the events at Caoimhín Mac Brádaigh's funeral in 1988.

Ten years on from the beginning of that first hunger-strike, British policy in the gaols has moved towards regarding long-term prisoners as hostages with which they can barter in their overall aim of defeating resistance to their presence in Ireland. It fits into the fourth piece of their strategy: Marginalisation. It is the classic counter-insurgency aim of isolating the activists from their popular base of support. Censor them, harass them, shoot them, imprison them, frighten those who may associate with them or share their views in any way, but reward those Nationalists who pose no threat to their rule. The recent withdrawal of funding from the Irish language group, Glór na nGael, can be viewed in this light. No-one for a moment believes that they had 'links with paramilitaries'. The move is designed not only as an attack on the Irish-language movement but to create a climate of McCarthyism — a fear of associating with Republicans in case it brings punishment from the state.

In the last few years, marginalisation has been honed into a coherent policy. Responding to the rise of Sinn Féin as an electoral force in the 1980s (a rise which began with the mass support for the POWs' struggle against criminalisation), the British have co-opted the forces of constitutional nationalism who fear radical change more than they desire an end to British interference in Irish affairs. Attempts are being made to reach 'a political settlement', a false peace which ignores the root cause of conflict in Ireland — the British presence.

When we recall the period of hunger-strikes and remember those who died both within the gaol and outside its walls, we must place events in their political context. The battle for recognition as political prisoners did not begin on October 17th, 1980, but long before then. It continues today and is evident in the pages of this magazine. The attempts to criminalise our struggle have never ceased — they have merely taken a new direction.

Ten years ago, the anti-H-Block/Armagh agitation welded together popular feeling against Britain's behaviour towards the prisoners and brought attention back to the central question of its misrule in Ireland. We must begin again the building of popular resistance against Britain's presence and take on board the lessons learnt from the hunger-strike period. In the words of Bobby Sands: *'Everyone has a part to play in the struggle.'* Our task must be to direct and encourage that participation.

# STOP EXTRADITION!

Extradition is an issue of immediate and urgent concern as the Supreme Court hearing into the case of Dessie Ellis approaches in November. Since 1984, we in Portlaoise have witnessed the appalling spectacle of three Irish Republican prisoners, Seamus Shannon, Robert Russell and Paul Kane, being dragged from their cells by fellow Irishmen and handed over to the British occupation forces on Irish soil.

Since the signing of the Hillsborough Agreement in 1985, added impetus has been given to the smoothing of the extradition process. The 26-County government, just-

fied by revisionists who write designer history, lauded by a sycophantic media and cushioned by complete censorship of the only genuine political opposition in Ireland, have gained

increasing confidence in overtly collaborating with Britain's political and military objectives in our country.

Extradition is of utmost importance to the British, not because they believe it can do any substantive damage to the Republican Movement's infrastructure but because of Britain's desire to thoroughly enmesh the 26 Counties into its counter-insurgency programme. It is an objective which the British and their agents of influence throughout the 26-County establishment have lobbied long and hard to achieve.

It is important not to be lulled into a false sense of complacency because of recent successes in the courts with Jim Clarke, Dermot Finucane and Owen Carron. The enemies of Irish freedom, foreign and domestic, will not be easily deflected from their goals and the media will be sure to keep their views to the fore.

A hidden agenda of increased collaboration between Dublin and London was the major incentive which prompted Thatcher to sign the Hillsborough agreement in the first place. She wants these Irish patriots in her custody and we should not underesti-

mate Dublin's anxiety to facilitate her. Once the Free Staters and the British have ironed out largely unforeseen technicalities, they hope future extradition requests will require only a nod and a rubber-stamp.

Dessie Ellis can prove without fear of contradiction that he was never in England on the dates claimed by the British. Indeed, for most of that time he was in jail in the US and Ireland. Yet the 26-County district and high courts have ordered his extradition to England to answer conspiracy charges. When one considers the cases of the Birmingham Six, the Guildford Four, the Maguire family, the Winchester Three and others, it defies belief that Dublin would even consider extraditing an Irish citizen to that regime for any alleged offence, never mind the notorious conspiracy charge.

It is the most nebulous of accusations and turns the whole concept of innocent until proven guilty completely on its head. In effect, Dessie Ellis is being forced to appear before the most reactionary and racist tribunal an Irishman can possibly confront to prove that he has had no impure thoughts about British rule in Ireland.

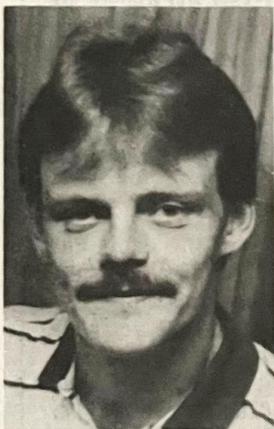
It is of vital importance to Dessie Ellis and his family, to the men and women who must surely follow and to our respect and dignity as a nation that we do everything in our power to stop the extradition of political prisoners. Whether it involves attending meetings or the lobbying of TDs, churchmen, the Fianna Fáil grass-roots or whatever, we all have a role to play.

**John Crawley**  
(Portlaoise) ■

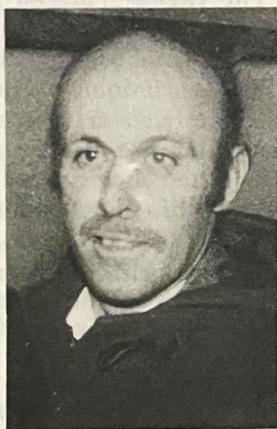
If you would like further information contact:  
**Irish Anti-Extradition Committee,**  
29 Mountjoy Square,  
Dublin 1.

Tel (01) 366489.

Money is urgently needed for the campaign. Donations to: IAEC A/C 88331532, Bank of Ireland, Rotunda Branch, Dublin 1.



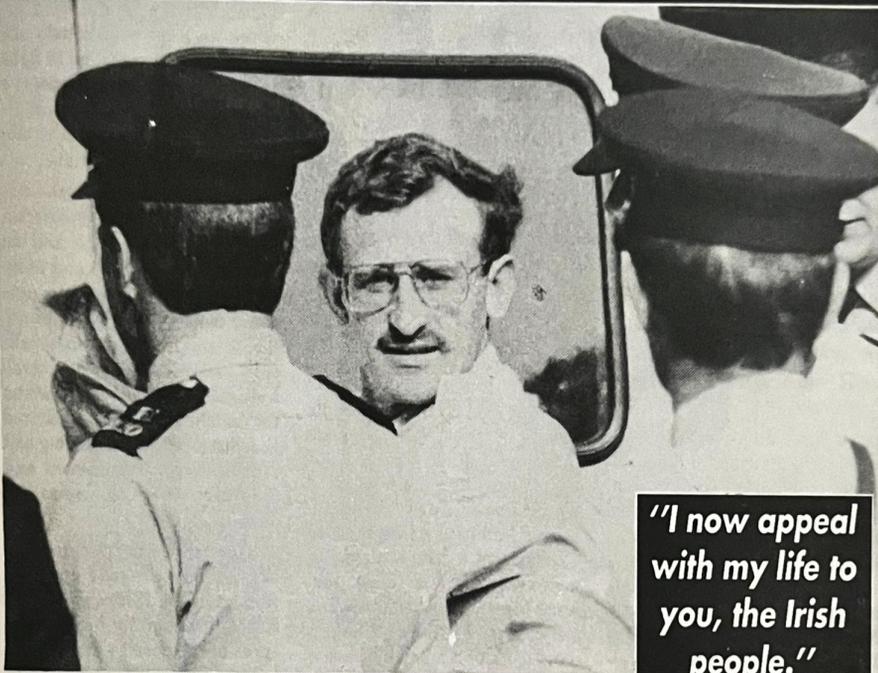
● ROBERT RUSSELL



● PAUL KANE



● SEAMUS SHANNON



**"I now appeal  
with my life to  
you, the Irish  
people."  
- Dessie Ellis**

# Hunger-strike against extradition

The continuing collaboration of the Dublin government in implementing the political extradition of Irish Republicans to face British 'justice' has now led to a crisis situation. On October 10th, Dessie Ellis embarked on hunger-strike, following the failure of the High Court to rule in favour of his appeal against extradition to Britain on conspiracy charges.

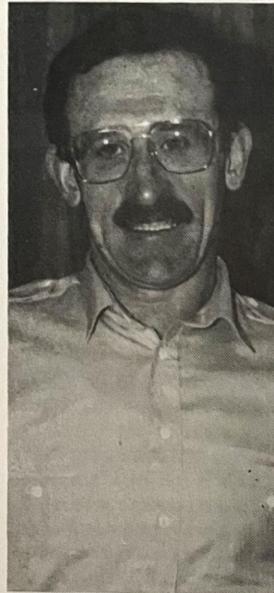
**I**n a statement issued from Portlaoise Prison when commencing his fast, Dessie Ellis said:

*"I am going on hunger-strike, to the death if necessary, to prevent my extradition to Britain. The government has it in its power to stop my extradition and only the Irish people can force the government to act. I now appeal with my life to you, the Irish people."*

If extradited, given the nature of conspiracy charges which effectively shift the burden of proof onto the accused, it

is highly unlikely that a British court would not convict him. His Republican background alone would probably be enough to find him guilty — a background which would be front-page fodder for the tabloid lie-machine.

Dessie Ellis was born on October 9th 1952. He and his three brothers and three sisters grew up in a Dublin Corporation house in Finglas, on the north side of the city. He was a member of na Fianna Eireann as a young lad and later became actively involved in the struggle for freedom. In May 1981, he



was arrested and found guilty of explosives offences in the non-jury Special Court in Dublin. He jumped bail before his trial in early February 1982 but was

arrested on February 6th while attempting to cross the Canadian border into the United States.

His plea for political asylum was rejected and he was deported to the 26 Counties in March 1983. Following his conviction, he was taken to Portlaoise to serve his eight-year sentence. On April 27th, just 24 hours before he was due for release, he was taken to the Bridewell in Dublin and rearrested on foot of two extradition warrants.

The High Court ruled on appeal that British justice for Irish people is fair and that the alleged offences, which relate directly to the war against British occupation, were not politically motivated.

Ellis argues that he was either in Ireland under constant Garda surveillance or in jail during the 34-month period between January '81 and October '83 specified in the charges of being in control of explosive substances in England and conspiring with others to cause explosions in Britain.

Dessie's trial in England has already been prejudiced by adverse media coverage. The elaborate and ostentatious high security which would surround the trial, and the usual rabid media coverage which always accompanies Irish political trials, would give the desired impression of guilt, while the jury would be specially vetted by the British Special Branch.

The fight against extradition is one which Republicans at every level have been fighting for most of the '80s and now into the '90s. The difficulty which the Dublin government still experiences in its attempts to grease the wheels of the extradition process is testament to the success of anti-extradition campaigners. However, now we are faced with a crisis situation. Dessie Ellis refuses to participate in the charade any longer. He knows exactly what faces him if he is extradited and, sooner than spend the rest of his life in an English hellhole, he has taken the ultimate decision, to put his very life on the line. ■

# PRISON STRUGGLE

In the H-Blocks of Long Kesh, Republicans have created the necessary conditions required to complement our Republican identity and allow us adequately to express our Republican beliefs. In acknowledging this fact, however, we must also make clear that the pathway to this arduous but proud achievement has not been without intense anguish and conflict, nor is it one which we believe is fully completed.

For over 14 years, we have sacrificed much in our efforts to establish our present position. Brutality, oppression, degradation, hardship, psychological terror and, ultimately, the deaths of ten of our comrades have been the price we have been forced to pay. At times throughout this period, doubts, confusion, disagreement and loss of commit-

ment have all been aspects of our internal struggle — but despite these inevitable hazards of prison life we have succeeded in keeping our objectives firmly in sight.

Today, our segregated lifestyle has provided us with a relatively conflict-free environment. This hard-won accomplishment has allowed us a limited control of our lives, giving us the ability to form

a Republican 'community', catering for our collective interests as Republican prisoners. It is this community structure and community attitude which gives us the degree of strength presently at our disposal. Deriving from this composition, and originating within it, we pursue our activities as active political prisoners.

We view our organisational set-up as more than a simple 'closing of ranks' against the administration. Principally, it equips us with a frame of mind which allows us to develop a better understanding of, and commitment to, the struggle for a new society and to put forward ideas on how this new society should be shaped. The primary task of all Republicans is the continuance and improvement of this construction. We

have battled long and hard for what we have consciously obtained. We are prepared to fight just as forcefully to preserve and better our situation — nothing will be allowed to obscure us from this pursuit.

We are political prisoners, aligned to a political organisation and a political struggle, and we are using our abilities, and we are of purpose to actively participate in our people's demands for peace, justice and freedom. The 'breaker's yard' Bobby Sands once warned against has now become the 'building site' that he strived to achieve. We are developing and expanding our commitment and dedication to our Republican ideals.

Our resolve to reinforce and extend our present circumstances in the H-Blocks of Long Kesh is steered by our experiences of the past 14 years — no issue is above this responsibility placed on us. ■

## Campaign for lifers

When the Campaign for Lifers was formed in 1988, it formulated six proposals for changes in the Life Sentence Review Board, the body responsible for determining whether or not a life/SOSP\* prisoner should be released. Although the proposals attracted widespread support from the public and prison reform groups, the Northern Ireland Office has refused to act upon them. Instead, they have attempted to cloud the issue and to divert attention from the LSRB by introducing a parole scheme for life/SOSP prisoners who have served 13 or more years. Under this scheme these prisoners are allowed to spend a few days twice a year with their families.

While the Campaign recognises a positive dimension to these paroles, it also knows that they are, in the words of NIO minister Cope, "part of the battle for hearts and minds". Parole does not equal release — it does draw attention away from the Life Sentence Review Board.

The NIO's stated criteria for release are:

That prisoners have served a "sufficient" period of time in

prison, and

That they pose no "risk to the public".

Given that Private Ian Thain — the only member of the crown forces ever sentenced for the killing of a Nationalist — was released after serving two-and-a-half years of a life sentence, we can take it that two to three years can be deemed a "sufficient" period of imprisonment; and given that prisoners can be allowed out for four to six days on parole

(some prisoners have now been out on four such paroles), we can also take it that they pose no "risk to the public".

Only the immediate and full implementation of the six proposals will end the inherent bias and political manipulation behind releases. Cosmetic gestures serve only to hide the central issues and further intensify the feelings of uncertainty that prisoners and their families experience. The happiness which a family feels when reunited is soon overshadowed by the heartache of being split up once

again... and again... and again.

Life/SOSP prisoners are being held and used as political hostages. Their continued incarceration, coupled with the cynical use of periods of parole, are geared towards inflicting immense psychological pressure upon them and their families with a view to de-politicising them.

We ask those individuals and groups who support our six proposals to direct their efforts once again towards their speedy implementation. If prisoners can be released on parole, they can be released — permanently.

\* An SOSP prisoner is sentenced to be detained at the Secretary of State's Pleasure if he/she was under 18 years of age at the time of the 'offence'.

### CAMPAIGN FOR LIFERS

Conway Mill, 5/7 Conway Street, Belfast

Proposals for change in the Life Sentence Review Board procedure:

- The abolition of indeterminate sentences.
- The right to legal representation.
- The publication of objective criteria for release.
- The right to know the reasons for any unfavourable decisions.
- The ending of secret reports.
- The right to challenge the make-up of the Review Board.



## The trial of Gerry Hanratty and Gerry McGeough

We received the following account of the first two days of the trial from the North of Ireland Group in Freiburg, West Germany:

The trial is taking place in a special 'court building', which is not really a court but part of the police barracks. The whole building is surrounded by the police barracks and — we can assure you — it's not the most comfortable place to be. We call it 'trial clink', with heavily-armed police, special units and so forth all around the place.

There was a rally outside held by the Ireland Solidarity groups from East and West Germany. The media were present on a massive scale and so there was the opportunity for the solidarity groups to get their message across. Banners demanded a British withdrawal from Ireland, protested against the criminalisation of the Irish freedom struggle by the German authorities and demanded the release of the two Gerrys. Another banner read: 'Ireland united — Ireland free — Take it from the bourgeoisie!'

Talks were given which detailed the interest of the West German state in criminalising the Republican Movement, a re-

view of the extradition machinery and the situation of the two Gerrys after two years on remand in West Germany.

Because of the massive media presence, there were no places left in the courtroom during the morning session. In the afternoon, most of the media people were gone and there were about 80-90 people in the courtroom who had some sympathy with the Irish liberation struggle. So, when the two entered the courtroom, there was a warm welcome. When they left the courtroom, people were shouting, "Up the international solidarity" and "Ireland united...".

Both of them seemed to have a lot of power and were very concentrated in following the trial. And that is remarkable when they had spent two years in solitary confinement.

Even if they are not being charged under Section 129a of the Criminal Code (membership of a terrorist organisation) we are still of the opinion that the function of the trial is to state publicly that the IRA is a 'ter-

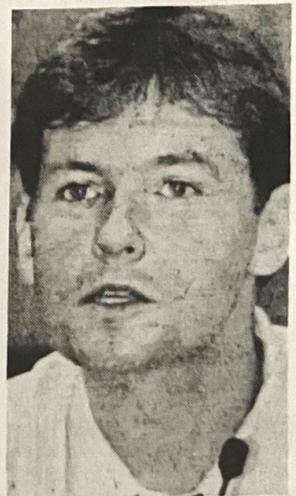
rorist organisation'. Further, such 'terrorist' trials could be conducted against the three Irish people held in France — for whom the West German authorities have filed extradition requests — and the recently-arrested Irish people in Belgium and the Netherlands.

The DPP is not solely concerned with sentencing the two men for the alleged offences against the British Rhine Army on West German soil. An exemplary case is to be made and the Irish liberation struggle as a whole is to be publicly criminalised and condemned. In this way, European anti-terrorist norms may be created for dealing with national liberation organisations — something which can also be seen in the current trial in Düsseldorf of 16 Kurds for alleged membership of a 'terrorist organisation'.

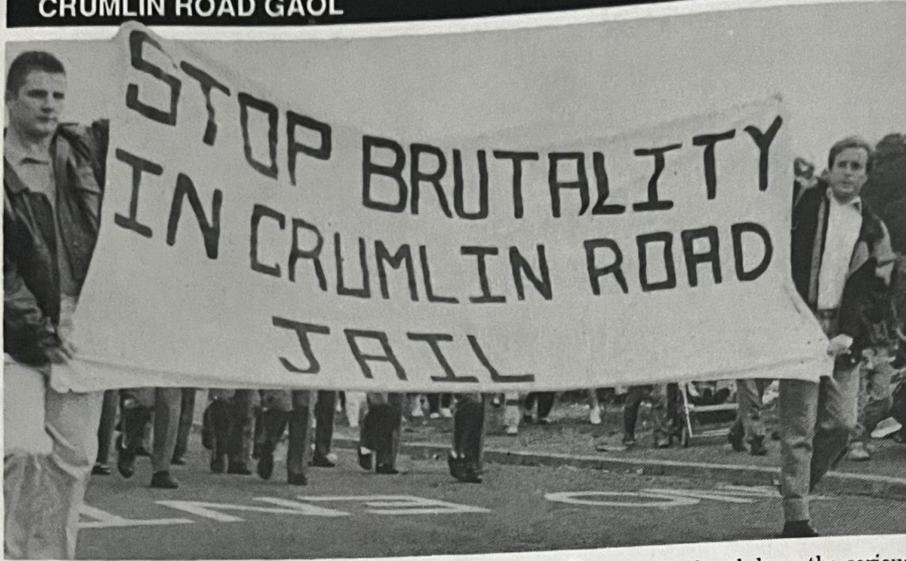
We consider this to be one further step in the direction of unifying European legal measures for repressing struggles and conflicts in Europe. The political dimension of the struggle in Ireland against British colonial rule and oppression of the Irish national population is to be completely removed from the case. ■



● GERRY HANRATTY



● GERRY MCGEOUGH



# Crumlin Road Gaol

Monday, September 3rd, saw the beginning of the judicial challenge to the Northern Ireland Office's policy of forced integration in Crumlin Road Gaol on the grounds that:

**I**t discriminates against remand prisoners by "failing to provide the necessities of life and the opportunity to engage in constructive activities, such as education, training, hobbies and sport" (Prison Service aims and objectives); and

It creates conditions under which the safety and well-being of the prisoners cannot be provided for.

The NIO have deliberately sought to delay the judicial procedure by denying the prisoners' legal representatives access to documents relevant to the case — a tactic which in itself is indicative of the contempt with which the NIO treats any prisoner who has the audacity to confront its discriminatory practices. Recently, in typical arrogant fashion, Mr J. Steele, the Controller of Prisons in the Six Counties, reaffirmed that segregation is "not even an option" while simultaneously revealing details of new measures designed to "ease the situation" in the gaol.

Throughout the current period of unrest in Crumlin Road Gaol, various NIO spokespersons have resorted to similar outbursts of empty rhetoric in a

vain attempt to disguise their lack of a coherent policy capable of creating conditions more conducive to the physical well-being of all prisoners. Thus, while the NIO dismissed the campaign for segregation as an "orchestrated campaign by a group of Loyalist and Republican remand prisoners who are attempting to force the prison authorities to segregate prisoners according to their so-called paramilitary affiliation" and spoke of "paramilitary influences" and "collusion", John Cope, the security minister, announced the introduction of what he euphemistically described as "special measures" designed to reduce the degree of contact between Loyalist and Republican groups in an attempt to control the increasing amount of serious confrontations.

Surely if Loyalists and Republicans were colluding openly it would not be necessary to go to such lengths to separate them at every opportunity?

Brian Feeny of the SDLP and Cecil Walker of the OUP have criticised the blatant duplicity of the NIO over their release of inaccurate statements

which played down the serious nature of recent disturbances. The prison administration was accused of "misleading the public in an attempt to justify its intransigence in facing up to the issue that matters... the safety of the prisoners" (*Irish News*, Au-

gust 17th, 1990).

It is difficult to understand why the NIO have taken such a hardline stance. Forced integration was originally introduced in 1976 as an integral part of the British government's criminalisation policy and it has collapsed in every other prison in the occupied Six Counties. Some prisoners have opted to move to integrated wings in Maghaberry Prison but it must be stressed that they do so by choice; remand prisoners have no such option.

On entering Crumlin Road Gaol, in a typically inept NIO attempt to depoliticise the issue, prisoners are allowed to choose which religious group they would prefer to associate with (which corresponds to their professed political allegiance) but at any time in the period spent on remand a prisoner is free to renounce his right to associate with his political bedfellows and can move to a fully



integrated wing which normally houses criminals, petty crooks and sex offenders, etc.

It is difficult to accept the NIO argument that segregation would extend the degree of paramilitary control over fellow prisoners when this 'safety valve' remains in place. If anything, the policy of forced integration facilitates the strengthening of political organisation in the gaol because 'ordinary' prisoners look upon the Republican Movement as the only group capable of guaranteeing their safety from sectarian attacks.

It is obvious to everyone but the dogmatic NIO propagandists that the introduction of segregation is the only feasible and workable response to a problem which is firmly rooted in the sectarian origins of this statelet.

Various welfare and charitable agencies have expressed their deep concern at the continued NIO intransigence and, along with church leaders, politicians and political parties of all descriptions, have unanimously declared their support for the immediate introduction of segregated conditions. Some of these bodies have years of experience in dealing with prison issues, e.g. the Northern Ireland Association for the Rehabilitation of Offenders, while others have concentrated on the promotion of community integration. Yet all agree that it is totally unrealistic to expect Republicans and Loyalists to mix amicably in the current political climate.

Fr. B. Crilly, from the ecumenical group the Irish Council of Churches, described the present prison policy as the "worst of both worlds" in that prisoners are caught in a Catch 22 situation. If they do attempt to integrate (official NIO policy) they immediately expose themselves to the danger of attack, yet under the present system of de facto segregation (unofficial but tacitly recognised NIO policy) they are forced to lose half of all available facilities, such as exercise, education, access to canteens etc. This means that all prisoners are locked up for an

average of 22 hours per day and are still not provided with a totally safe environment.

Clearly, the NIO have available the resources necessary to resolve this impasse. Prisoners have tolerated these adverse conditions for far too long. Surely from past experience the NIO realise that their head-in-the-sand attitude can only provide further reaction from protesting prisoners and their supporters? The NIO are the major barrier to a peaceful and speedy resolution of this problem.

During the month of August alone, nine prisoners received medical treatment for injuries received as a consequence of the integration policy. In 14 major incidents, structural damage was caused to washrooms and canteens, members of the prison staff were assaulted and the Loyalist prisoners entered into a protracted 'slop-out' protest which left the landings of the gaol flooded with urine for ten days at the height of the summer heatwave. Although the Loyalists were exclusively responsible for this particular protest, Republicans were also punished by being refused access to canteens and showers, and being forced to eat all their meals in tiny unhygienic cells.

Clearly, Republicans cannot be realistically expected meekly to accept these disgraceful conditions. Past prison protests have shown how a vocal and public opposition to discriminatory policies can often force a hasty retreat. In every major town in the Six Counties, a Relatives Action Committee has been formed to co-ordinate and initiate demonstrations, pickets and petitions against the policy of forced integration.

We hope the NIO possess the moral courage necessary to admit that their prison strategies are basically flawed. Failing that, we are confident that the overwhelming level of support for the reasonable demands of the prisoners will force a concession. As more people become aware of the seriousness of the situation, it can only add to the weight of opinion supporting the immediate introduction of segregation. ■

# Basque Prisoners in Struggle

Echoes of our own prison struggle are resounding through 90 prisons in Spain. Within those walls over 500 Basque political prisoners are protesting against the criminalisation policies of the Spanish state. Their non-cooperation protest is a disciplined response to Spanish attempts to deny the existence of political prisoners.

he dispersal of these men and women from one 'special' jail has gone hand in hand with a deliberate worsening of conditions. Offers of early release are also being used in an effort to neutralise individual prisoners and thereby undermine the Basque independence movement.

Six prisoners have died so far — one on hunger-strike, the others through lack of medical attention.

This isolation and upsurge in oppression of prisoners is an attempt, in the words of one Basque activist, "to create unbearable conditions of life in order to force repentance or to achieve the psychological and physical destruction of the Basque militant".

The struggle of the Basque prisoners is familiar to us and, just as Thatcher failed, so too will Gonzales in his attempt to criminalise a risen people. The Irish and the Basques suffer together in the denial of sovereignty and the suppression of cultural identity.

Below is an edited version of a communiqué from the prisoners

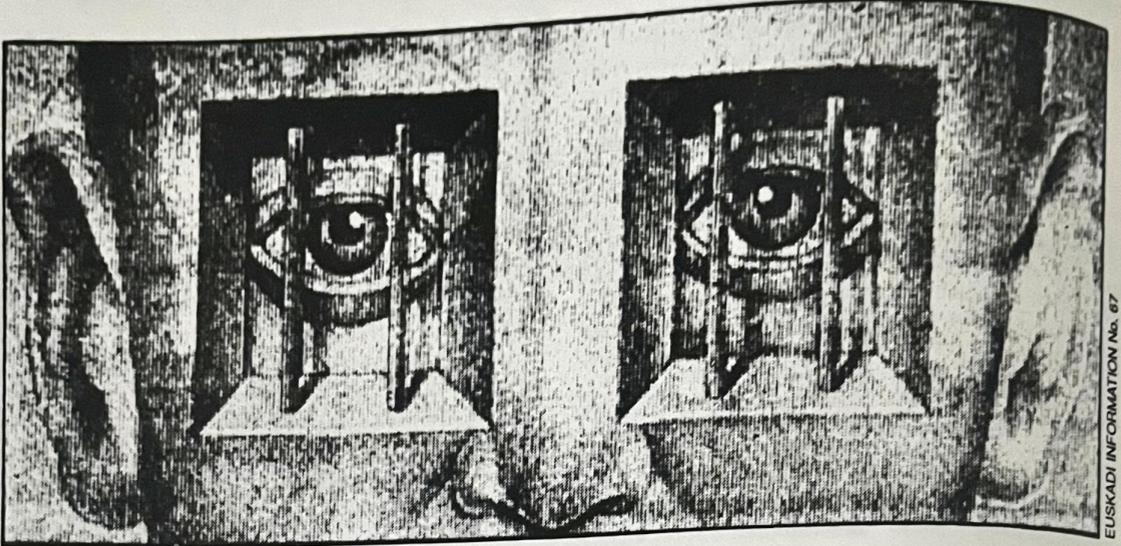
which was issued at the start of their protest.

## COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE COLLECTIVE OF BASQUE POLITICAL PRISONERS

*We, the Basque political prisoners held in the different jails of the Spanish state, address ourselves to all the Basque people, and to public opinion in general, in order to communicate our firm intention to resist the repressive offensive that the Spanish state has once again directed against us within the framework of a repressive police operation against the Basque people as a whole. We once again announce that it will not be through repressive police measures that a solution will be found to the political and military conflict waged by the Basque people against the Spanish state. This will come instead through recognition by the Spanish state of our people's national*



● Basque delegation in West Belfast



We are conscious that our presence in jail is part of the price that our people must pay for the recovery of our sovereignty, and that all of the repressive measures imposed on us have the political objective of condemning us to silence and of trying to bring about the failure of our firm commitment to resist politically, which is something they will never achieve.

In the course of the last 12 years, all of us who have been swelling the ranks of this Collective have contributed to creating, enriching and consolidating a further front of struggle within the overall confrontation between the Spanish state and the Basque people. From the moment that one of us is deprived of his/her liberty, we know that our post is here inside, that we must make our contribution at every moment in the context that surrounds us and in accordance with the real possibilities of intervention that the struggle presents.

In this sense, the existence of a coherent and organised Collective of prisoners is a fact that cannot be assimilated by a state which pretends to be democratic and claims that every political aspiration can find expression within it. The state needs to eliminate every sign of real opposition which

things; it must convert all real resistance into a mere criticism silenced behind bars, into something lacking in all revolutionary, radical virtue. It is only on the basis of this analysis that one can understand the 'carrot and stick' policy, the extermination of committed prisoners and the 'reinsertion' [the policy of early release for those who renounce their political beliefs] of those who have been unable to resist, which is the basic axis of the prison strategy.

It is not an easy exercise to engage in struggle from the prisons. It will not be difficult for those familiar with Spanish prisons to imagine our desire to return to struggle shoulder to shoulder with the rest of the men and women of Euskadi [the Basque country]. But our political militancy has led us here, and from here, with our unbribable denunciation, we will continue to question the existing political framework, the need for whose destruction led us to take a carefully considered decision with which we will continue to be coherent.

In the face of those who want us to betray our people — and in this way to betray ourselves — the Basque political prisoners must renounce, for obvious reasons of political honesty and coherence, any measure for obtaining release

sent political framework.

In spite of the limitations on the forms of struggle that can be developed, in spite of the years of prison that many of us have borne and the defencelessness to which we find ourselves subjected, we have started a demand-oriented struggle that takes the form of an indefinite 'Chapeo' [non-cooperation with the prison authorities]. This decision is based on the consideration that we are a collective of Basque political prisoners and, as such, we demand:

- The regrouping of all the Basque political prisoners.
- The same regime for all of us, in the understanding that the convictions, causes and resolution of our situation are the same, without distinction or differentiation between the prisoners.
- Our separation from the social prisoners, in the understanding that this measure is one of respect for a different dynamic and problem.
- Improvements in the living conditions within the prisons, which is not a privilege but a right.
- The accumulation of weekly visits from family and friends.
- The right to real health care.
- The right to study and to work.
- An end to the humiliation and ill-treatment involved in having

ranks and at attention.

- Provision of space for study and workshops.
- The right to intimacy and to privacy of communication and correspondence.
- The right to food and the unrestricted access to foodstuffs.
- The right to communicate in Euskara, our national language.
- The right to judicial defence and penitentiary assistance.
- The right to correspondence without restriction on the number of letters.
- The right to 'face-to-face' communication with family and friends.
- The right to read without restriction on the amount of books or study materials.

We are conscious that with the policy of extermination and isolation that they are trying to carry out on us, it will be difficult to win this struggle, but at the same time we can see with absolute clarity that reason and justice are on our side. The mere fact of our resistance constitutes a contribution to the achievement of the political negotiations; this demand is therefore included within our strategy of struggle at the service of the overall struggle that will lead into a Total Amnesty.

Long live free Euskadil  
 Long live socialist Euskadil  
 For national sovereignty!

# Casement show trials

On Saturday, March 19th, 1988, people from all over the world turned out to pay their respects to the victims of the vicious sectarian attack on the funeral of the three IRA Volunteers shot dead in Gibraltar. One of those victims was Caoimhín Mac Bradaigh and, as his funeral approached Casement Park on the Andersonstown Road, a car with two unknown men in it drove at speed towards the cortege.

The dramatic arrival of this car caused panic among the mourners and media — everyone thought it was another Loyalist attack. The car was quickly surrounded by mourners and stewards to find out the men's identity and intentions. At this stage the stewards also prevented rash and violent action against the occupants, while remaining alert to the possibility of it being a Loyalist attack.

Fear became reality when the two men, who had still not identified themselves, produced guns and threatened the mourners around the car. Within seconds, total panic ensued when the driver fired into the mourners. This caused the crowd to scatter for cover, but a small group remained at both sides of the car and struggled

with the two gunmen to overpower and disarm them. Both were finally disarmed and later shot dead by the IRA.

To this day no-one except the British knows why the men were on the Andersonstown Road. During the five 'show trials' to date the Crown has presented five different explanations. None of them ring true. The trials have left many unanswered questions.

Tom King, British Secretary of State at the time, said: "The route they [the soldiers] were on was out of bounds to non-operational army personnel." Then why were they there?

King further stated: "In terms of what the soldiers knew, I understand that there was a general briefing at the beginning of the week about the problems posed by the tension aris-

ing from the funerals." Why did they ignore that briefing?

When they reached Mooreland Park and were able to see the approaching funeral being led by a row of taxis stretching across the full width of the road, why didn't they turn and go back?

On reaching the row of taxis and finding their way blocked, why did they mount the footpath on the wrong side of the road and drive at high speed towards the cortege? They still had ample time to turn.

There are also numerous unexplained facts in the case. The driver of the car had a civilian security pass which he used that morning to gain entry to a British army base in Hollywood. He was carrying extra ammunition and an extension butt for his gun, neither of which had been signed out to him. He had slept in his car at the Whiterock army base the previous night, returning to Lisburn at 7.30am on Saturday, where he showered and dressed in his suit to meet his girlfriend. Then, out of the blue, he volunteered for duty (supposedly to go to Hollywood to collect keys). If the court depositions are to be be-

lieved, the two soldiers were in three different places, miles apart, at the same time.

The clear inference to be taken from all this is that the two soldiers were on undercover, operational duties without liaison with the RUC.

One incontrovertible fact that stands out in the case is that there was no premeditation, or even the suggestion of it, on the part of anyone charged — we simply reacted to defend ourselves and our community. As a result of this scores of people have been arrested and 39 charged to date.

On May 1st 1990, the Casement Accused Relatives Committee was formed. Its objectives are to highlight the injustices of the Diplock system under which the show trials were held, of the RUC handling of the cases and of the role of the media, and to seek answers to all the outstanding questions. To date, 20 men have been convicted and over 600 years handed out in jail sentences (ranging from life to three years). It is generally accepted in the Nationalist community that this is an act of revenge by the British government against the people of West Belfast.

Since the Committee was established, it has been conducting a vigorous campaign throughout Ireland and internationally — seeking support from clergy, politicians, legal groups, human rights bodies and the community at large. It has launched a petition and the response has been encouraging. Successful pickets have been held outside the court during the appeals of Harry Maguire and Alex Murphy and white-line pickets in our areas have been well attended.

The campaign is gathering support both at home and abroad. An information pack is available on request. If you would like to become involved in the campaign or to support it in any way, please contact me at the address below:

Sean Lennon, A2008,  
H-Blocks,  
Long Kesh,  
Country Antrim,  
North of Ireland.



# HARVEY

FAD agus a bhí mé ar scoil bhí mé i gcónaí ag lorg post páirtaimseartha chun mo chuid airgid phóca a fháil. D'oibrigh mé mar sheachadaí nuachtáin; mar ghlantóir eaglaise, tochalaí prátaí, scamhaire prátaí, mar chúntóir búistéara, mar theachtaire monarchan bróg agus mar ghiolla greasaí. Bhí mé ag obair i veain ag díol glasraí agus i veain eile ag ullmhú scallóga prátaí. Ach ba é an post ba bhuaine agam ná giolla i siopa grósaera i Sráid an Diúic i nDoire. Bhí sé san áit sin ar chéad bhuail mé le Harvey.

Bhí Harvey ina bhiogóid — ní an dara rogha do fhocail agam ach an focal sin. B'fhuath leis Caitlicigh, agus, (de réir na staire athscríofa atá i réim anois) bhí sé ina biogóid ag am nuair nach raibh biogóideachas i bhfaisean. Sa bhliain cháiliúil úd 1969 bhíodh Harvey sa siopa go laethúil, ina shuí le linn ár sos tae, agus é ag tabhairt amach faoi fheachtais na gcearta sibhialta; faoi na mic léinn gona foill fhada, faoi ghirsigh Ollscoile ar na sráideanna. Bhíodh sé ag gearán faoi na daoine seo ag fáil an dól, an líntas clainne agus 'saol ar muin na muice' de bharr dheontais an stáit.

## HARVEY

When I was at school, I was forever on the lookout for a part-time job to earn some pocket money. I worked in every sort of messenger job going — I was a paper-boy (there were paper-girls too), a cleaner in the chapel, a spud picker and later a spud peeler. I was a butcher's helper, a messenger in a boot factory and a cobbler's message boy, a helper on a grocery van and the same on a fish and chip wagon... But the longest running job I ever had was as a message boy in a grocer's shop in Duke Street in Derry. And it was there that I first met Harvey.

Harvey was a bigot. There is no other word to describe him except bigot. He hated Catholics and, according to this revised version of his

tory that we all have to put up with today, he was a bigot at a time when it wasn't even the fashion. Throughout the year of destiny, 1968, Harvey would be in the the shop every day, sitting running down the Civil Rights campaign, long-haired students and girls from the University out marching on the streets. He would be complaining about these people taking the Dole and living on the pig's back with Family Allowances and state grants.

"It would fit them far better to go out and get a job instead of lying there wasting our money and attacking our state," he would say.

He was told one day to have a bit of consideration; did he not see that I was in the shop and that I 'kicked with the other foot'. He didn't care and neither did I. I was just waiting for my chance to use that foot for a bit of kicking some day, but that's another story, as they say.

Anyway, he was always gurning about the Civil Rights and unemployed Catholics and how easy they were getting life, and it suddenly struck me that the 'boul' Harvey himself wasn't exactly gainfully employed. He was in the shop every day but he used it as a sort of social

## Le Eoghan Mac Cormaic (An Cheis Fhada)

tafocht. Bhí sé, mar a dúirt mé, sa siopa achan lá ach ní raibh sé ag obair ann. Bhí an siopa mar ionad sóisialta aige. D'ardaigh mé an cheist seo leis an Boss. Hmm. Bhí post ag Harvey. Bhí sé ina B Speisialta istofche. Tchím, ach ní fheicim. Like, is caitheamh aimsire í ballraíocht na Speisialtaithe agus ní obair é do leithéid Harvey. Bhí an Boss i bponc, agus cúpla lá tar éis sin tháinig sé ar réiteach...

Bhain Harvey an siopa amach an mhaidin seo agus ghlaigh an Boss é isteach an oifig.

"Harvey," arsa sé. "Tá tú 40 bliain d'aois anois agus ní lá amháin oibre déanta agat i do shaol fós. Tá tú chomh leisciúil leis na Caitlicigh a bhíonn á gcáineamh agat gach lá."

"Bhuel," arsa Harvey, "Níl post maith go leor domsa sa bhaile seo. Nílím toilteanach obair tseal-aicmeach a dhéanamh fad agus atá Tadhg ar an dól. Tá go leor acu thart ar Dhoire dífhostaithe gan go mbeadhghá do Phrotestastúnaigh óga dtlseo cosúil liomsa a bheith ag obair mar sclábhaithe."

Mar a dúirt Brookeborough, is stát Protastúnach é seo do phobal Protastúnach! Níor aontaigh an Boss.

centre. I asked the Boss about it. Hmm. Harvey had a job: he was a B-Special. But, says I, that's more of a hobby to Harvey than a job. The Boss was stuck, and a few days later I realised how deep it all ran.

Harvey landed in to the shop as usual and the Boss called him into the office.

"Harvey," says he, "you're nearly 40 now and you've never done a hand's turn in your whole life. You're as lazy as the Catholics you're always going on about!"

"Well," says Harvey, "there isn't really a job in this town that would suit me. I'm not willing to take on demeaning work so long as there's Taigues on the Dole. There's enough of them about without expecting young Protestant men to do menial tasks!"

Like Brookeborough said, a Protestant state for a Protestant people... But the Boss didn't see it like that.

"I've found a job for you," he said. "You start in the BOC on Monday. The pay is good and I had to use a lot of influence... so don't let me down!"

On Monday, there was no sign of Harvey so the conversation at the

"Tá fostaíocht agam dúit i Monarcha B.O.C." ar seisean, "Beidh tú ag tosú maidin Dé Luain. Tá pó maith ann. Níl leip orm... fuair mé an post seo dúit trí mo theagmhálaí..."

Ar an Luain níor boladh Harvey sa siopa agus bhí an comhár go léir ar cén saghas oibrí a dhéanfaí as. Ní raibh mise réit-hóchasach; aithníonn ciaróg ciaróg eile. Ar an Mháirt áfach, cé a bhuail isteach sa siopa ach Harvey.

"In ainm De," arsa an Boss, "An bhfuil laethanta saoire agat cheana féin?"

Shuigh Harvey síos agus bhlaib sé cupán tae.

"Tá mé as an phost," arsa sé. "Níor inis tú dom gur post glan-tóra a bhí ann. Sin obair Fháin."

"Is obair é!" a scairt an Boss.

"Bhí sé salach..."

"Bhí overalls agat!"

"Sea, agus bhí siad faoi glas."

Ach bhí sé sliuchh..."

"Bhí bróga rubair agat!"

"Sea, agus bhí siad buí. Ach bhí múch ann fosta..."

"Bhí clogad anála agat!"

"Sea, agus bhí siad bán."

"Bhuel, cad é an shadhb mar sin?" arsa an Boss.

"Smaoinigh faoi," arsa Harvey.

"Culaith ghlas, clogad bhán agus bróga buí? Iosa Críost, bhí mé mar a bheadh an Trídhathach an agus é ag siúl! Agus níorbh fhéidir le B-Speisialtá dlíis, onórach oibríú i bpost mar sin!!!"

tea-break was all about what sort of worker he would make. I wouldn't have been so confident, knowing Harvey. Then on Tuesday who should sail in to the shop but Harvey.

"In the name of God," said the Boss, "have you a day off already?"

Harvey sat down and sipped a cup of tea.

"I've jacked it in," he declared.

"You didn't tell me it was a cleaner's job. That's Fenian work!"

"It's work!" said the Boss.

"It was dirty..."

"You had overalls to wear!"

"Aye, and they were green. Anyway, it was wet..."

"But sure you had rubber boots!"

"Aye, big orange boots. But the place was full of fumes..."

"Did they not supply a breathing mask?"

"Aye, a big white mask."

"Then what the hell was the problem?"

"Think about it," said Harvey. "A green suit, a white helmet, and a pair of orange boots. I was like a bloody big walking Tricolour, for Jaysus sake. And no self-respecting B-Man could ever work in a job like that!" ■

# Portlaoise lifers

The five Republican prisoners serving life sentences who have been released this year mark the first releases of this type in the 26-County state during the present campaign. They have served sentences ranging from eleven years five months to 16 years, up to twice as long as the average life sentence in the state (eight years four months). We welcome these long overdue releases.

However, the lifer situation is far from resolved. We have serious reservations about certain aspects of the review procedure and the operation of the system of releases. We will vigorously pursue the issues involved and, hopefully, they will be addressed in the near future. In the meantime, a number of other lifers are in the process of having their sentences reviewed. We would like to see a positive outcome to these reviews in the form of further releases.

While there has been some progressive development in the 26-County prison regime with regard to one category of lifer, the state has simultaneously created a new category of lifer — the 40-year prisoner. At present, we have three men on our landings who are serving sentences of 40 years. All had been sentenced to death but had their sentences commuted to 40 years, with the normal remission of 25%.

These prisoners have been informed by the state that they are going to serve a minimum of

30 years and that new legislation recently passed by Leinster House ensures that even the Minister of Justice cannot release them before 2014. This hardly squares with the comment made by a spokesperson for the Department of Justice who told the *Irish News* that the criteria for releasing prisoners sentenced to life are "constantly reviewed on a humane basis".

Sentences of 40 years are simply state revenge. What the state has done by passing special legislation to prevent the release of 40-year prisoners is to take away hope and thus institutionalise mental torture. We believe that the very essence of mental torture is the removal of hope, no hope of ever being released for any reason whatsoever, no light at the end of the tunnel, nothing for the prisoner or his family to look towards. Two of these men are married

with young children and the third was only 19 years old when the state threw away the key. These men have been in Portlaoise exactly six years (as of August 1990) and they and their families must be given reasonable release dates.

The issue of 40-year prisoners must not be allowed to rest. We learned an important lesson from the breakthrough in the campaign for release dates for the other lifers — the need to keep pressure on the authorities from sources across the political and ideological spectrum.

The state would like to forget about these Republicans until well into the next century. We must not afford them that luxury and we call upon the many concerned and compassionate people from all walks of life who have assisted us in the lifers campaign to remember these men and not allow the state to select special categories of prisoners on which to focus their revenge. ■

John Crawley  
(Portlaoise)

## Dessie Grew **OBITUARIES** and Martin McCaughey

It is said that to the revolutionary death is no surprise and indeed both Dessie Grew and Martin McCaughey were aware that their lives could be cut short by British forces. But to all Republicans, and in particular their comrades, their deaths brought forth once more the range of feelings we all experience when hearing of a Volunteer's death.

That initial anger directed at Britain and the arrogance of its power is mixed with frustration and a sense of uselessness from within prison cells. There is a sorrow and a pride that these men died fighting for an ideal which they held dear, and a deep determination that their struggle will continue. Their deaths also promoted a period of reflection, clearly seen on the faces of comrades who knew both men personally.

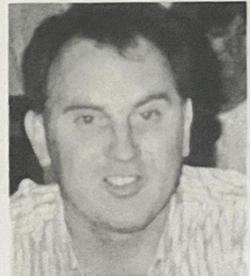
Dessie Grew spent many years in prison and was recognised as shrewdly intelligent and politically aware, as well as outgoing and friendly. He was a true activist and his life was a testament to his commitment to struggle.

Martin McCaughey was younger but his life was also one of commitment and of a capability which the British feared. Born in a poor part of County Tyrone, his experience as he grew up gave him a

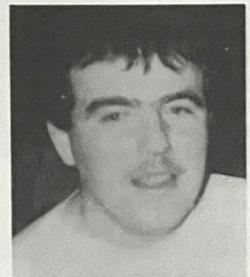
mature understanding of the corrupt state and its oppression. As a teenager he was chosen to play Gaelic football for his county at minor level but he gave up his youthful dream to represent Tyrone in order to play a full role in the struggle. He was renowned as a brave soldier as well as someone who enjoyed life.

Both Martin and Dessie would want to be remembered as ordinary men. It was the political circumstances in their country which forced them into lives dedicated to ending oppression. Their sense of dignity and their unselfish desire to produce a better world meant that they could not lead 'ordinary' lives and could not ignore the tyranny that they witnessed every day.

We reflect on their lives and on the manner of their deaths and we go forward to build the



● DESSIE GREW



● MARTIN McCAUGHEY

future which they so deeply desired.

Mairfidh an beirt laoch seo go deo i gcroithe an phobail.

# Sellafield

Every day in Long Kesh between 11.30am and 12 noon, someone asks the inevitable question, 'What's for dinner?' On Fridays the answer is usually, 'Sellafield', our nickname for fish. There was a time when that would have generated a laugh but not any more. Sellafield has become renowned as the dirtiest nuclear plant in the world and only those ignorant of the facts can be truly lighthearted about it.

Sellafield was built on the site of a disused TNT factory on the coast of Cumbria in North West England. The decision to build the plant was made by the British government, in line with their policy of creating an independent nuclear programme. Work began shortly after the World War II and was completed in 1951. The following year, the British government gave the go-ahead to explode its first nuclear bombs.

The plant was originally called Windscale but, like Long Kesh, a name change was ordered in the hope of banishing its unsavoury reputation. Today, Sellafield is owned and operated by British Nuclear Fuels Limited. It is a reprocessing plant, which means it retrieves quantities of uranium and plutonium from the spent fuel from nuclear plants throughout Britain to be used in the manufacture of nuclear bombs and fuel. It also reprocesses spent fuel from various countries who are only too willing to let Sellafield do their dirty work, usually because their own strict environmental laws wouldn't allow them to operate a plant like Sellafield.

Reprocessing spent nuclear fuel is a complex and highly dangerous process. It produces large quantities of radioactive gases and effluent which nature cannot take care of. So dangerous is the process that even the US with all its experience in nuclear technology has banned reprocessing altogether. But in Britain, due to Thatcher's commitment to a nuclear energy policy and an obsession with market forces, reprocessing continues.

Such policies give the direc-

tors of BNFL a free hand to carry on polluting our environment. Scientific evidence has shown that every day gaseous waste from the Sellafield plant is discharged into the atmosphere. Two million gallons of liquid waste, some of which contains the most toxic man-made substances, is discharged into the Irish Sea on a daily basis. A report in 1983 concluded that:

*"Radioactive discharges from Sellafield into the Irish Sea equalled the total discharges from all other nuclear installations in the world put together."*

These sorry facts have ensured that the Irish Sea is not only the most polluted in the world, it is now the most radioactively contaminated. Thus, everything that lives in the Irish Sea is contaminated in one way or another. Fish and shellfish are found to have levels of radioactivity way above those caught elsewhere. Some

seasoned Irish fishers have stated that there has been a marked increase in the number of diseased and deformed fish in their catches, the likes of which they have never witnessed before. In a small country like Ireland where many people depend on fishing for their livelihood, there is concern about the future of the industry.

There is disagreement on the extent and severity of damage to human health caused by Sellafield's discharges. However, new evidence regularly comes to light indicating that these discharges cause heart diseases, genetic defects and cancer. Numerous cases of leukemia and other radiation-linked diseases have been documented on both sides of the Irish Sea, particularly among children.

Despite these risks to our health and the environment, the discharges are set to continue. Responding to evidence that Sellafield is posing a major risk to our health, John Dunster, a former director of the plant, said that discharges into the Irish Sea were part of a "controlled experiment". Such a statement suggests that the directors of Sellafield have little interest in protecting lives, let alone the environment. How many controlled experiments will they carry out? Or must we wait for another Chernobyl before they come to their senses?

For their part, the British government argue that everything is being done to make nuclear

plants safe and to cut discharges to an acceptable level. But there is no such thing as a completely safe nuclear plant, nor can there be an acceptable level of radioactive gases and effluent. The Thatcher government is very heavily involved in promoting the nuclear industry. Millions of pounds are spent every year in subsidies to try to make it economically competitive. But it has failed to live up to expectations and nuclear power currently accounts for just over 3% of electricity consumption.

The Fianna Fáil government have made noises in public but have taken no effective action on the issue of Sellafield. Their latest position is that they are "considering" taking the British to the European Court of Justice over pollution from the plant. They must be forced, through public pressure, to take a much more determined stand.

The present crisis in the Gulf highlights the need to invest in other sources of energy, particularly renewable sources like the wind. The British government, however, would rather throw vast sums of money into the nuclear industry. It appears that their policy towards our health and environment is to act first, think later and to the Irish Sea with the consequences. Meanwhile, the people of Ireland are left to suffer from the actions of an uncaring and irresponsible British government. ■

Denis Gregg  
(Long Kesh)



Illustration by Terry Boyle (Long Kesh)

# Letter

A Chairde,

I think *An Glór* is excellent — readable, incisive and not overly sentimental or pretentious. I certainly enjoyed the last issue. Keep up the good work.

However, I think the articles in Irish shouldn't be translated. There exists an Irish-language community and they must be catered for. Of course, that community is smaller than the English-reading public, but so what? There are only 250,000 people in Iceland yet they publish more books in Icelandic per year than we do in Irish or English in Ireland. To translate the articles in *An Glór* into English makes the Irish redundant — a second-class language which is only relevant if translated into the dominant language.

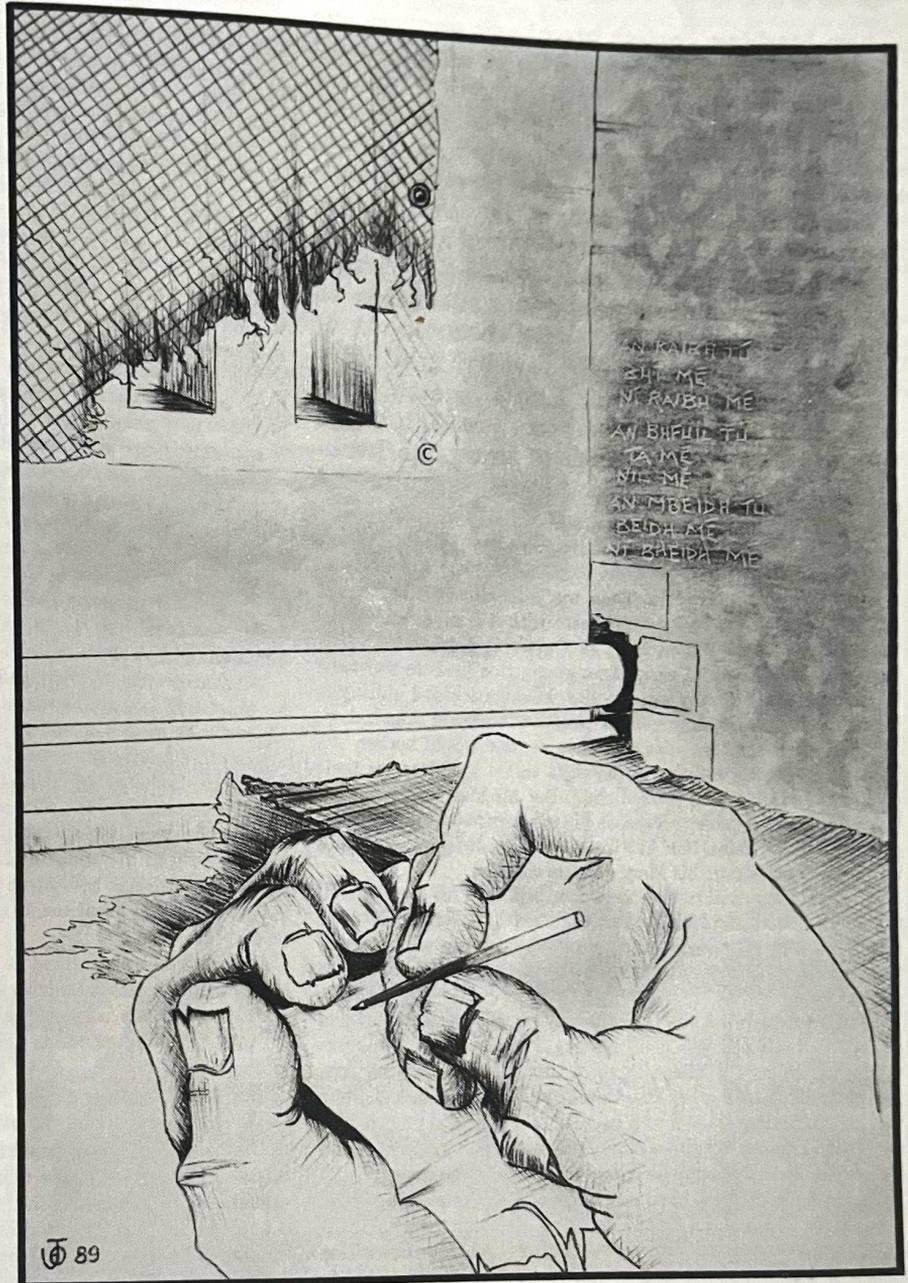
If we were to follow that logic, we would never use Irish because it's essential that when we say something 'important' we also say it in English. Any language with that sort of handicap is sure to die.

Of course, people will be aggrieved that they won't understand the Irish article — one article out of 20 in a magazine produced by the vanguard of the revolution. The solution is to learn Irish. But if everything is translated, why bother?

We all must respect the rights of Irish speakers. We must deal with them in their language. They have chosen to speak a language which is understood by a minority. That is their right. Our duty is to deal with them in that language.

Le meas mór,  
Máirtín O Muilleoir,  
Béal Feirste.

**Editor's Note:** The translation was introduced as a courtesy to those who do not speak or read Irish to give them a flavour of what the Irish articles contain. They were requested by readers who have no Irish and were curious to know the contents of the articles, by readers learning



Drawing by Joe Corbett (Long Kesh)

Irish who were daunted by a long article in Irish, and by overseas readers. It was not felt that the translations would detract from the Irish. Since they

were introduced, some Gaeilgeoirí have argued that they should be discontinued — Máirtín's letter is representative of the arguments. We would

welcome letters on the subject, from both sides of the argument. Should the articles in Irish be translated into English or not?

# Shiny Wellies

Liam Madden rested his cheek against the cool glass but observed little of what passed beneath. A year after arriving in Chicago, his enthusiasm for his journey on the elevated train had long been relegated to cloying routine. He barely registered now the suspicious oscillations and wheel-squealing turns around hair-pin bends 40 feet above the street. Although his gaze was fixed firmly out the window, he paid scant attention as the lower middle-class neighbourhoods of Irish, German and Pole flew by, gradually disintegrating into the Black ghetto, that ebony twilight zone through which some whites passed with an air of smug confirmation while others, like Madden, hunched down in embarrassed silence.

Two young blacks boarded at the next stop and sat opposite him. It brought to mind his incredible naivety when he first took the train to work. Then, too, a couple of blacks had sat opposite him and he had saluted them with a familiar nod of the head and a 'grand weather, lads', as if greeting neighbours in Kiltimagh. The sullen and accusatory glares this gesture provoked rapidly disabused him of the practice. Madden learned quickly to keep his own counsel, urbanise his focus, and stare out the window.

To anyone watching him, not that anyone would bother, the Irishman's seeming interest in the city's sights would mirror their own visual evasion on a packed train. But Madden wasn't looking out, he was looking deep within as his mind drifted over the series of events which found him hurtling toward an insatiable concrete mixer 4,000 miles from his Mary and five children.

The first blow, and to him the worst, had been his surrender of the small plot of land his father, God rest him, had stubbornly called 'the farm'. Madden bitterly recalled the stony soil on which he would grow nothing but tired and old. It was worth little and he got less for it.

Madden thought he was saved the day the helicopter landed and out bounced a happy wee man wielding a massive pair of scissors with which to cut the ribbon on an American camera factory. True enough it didn't take great skill to snap various pre-fabricated bits onto an aluminium frame but it beat lumps out of planting turnips and paid far better. For three years, Madden had a tantalising taste of economic security and its seductive hint of things to come.

Then the IDA grants ran out, with the Yanks close on their heels. A bit of a setback that. The happy wee man with the helicopter and the massive scissors was the very model of discretion and stayed tactfully away. But then there are no ribbons on a dole queue.

Madden was sure that a few weeks on assistance would see him right until he landed employment. Mary was a great encouragement. "Ah sure," she'd say, "something will turn up soon with the help of God." Although even God, with all his connections, couldn't come up with a job. Weeks drifted into months into... what, six years? Over 2,000 soul-destroying days. Nor did it take long for the inevitable little indignities endemic to that lifestyle to accumulate and inculcate in Madden a defeatist attitude. Mary noticed the deterioration in her husband and it frightened her. Tensions increased and rows became frequent. The children were often upset. Money,

or the lack of it, seemed to cause most of the friction.

Madden first broached the idea of going to America, having spent another Christmas nursing a rare pint and listening to returned emigrants tell of a land of work and dollars. Of course, he would have to go without the family for at least the first year until he got set up. This development frightened his wife even further and sparked off another round of acrimonious and debilitating debates. Madden was deaf to her pleading. He understood now that age-wise and every-wise he had reached a watershed and must clutch the straw or go down forever.

The night before he left for Shannon, he affected as cheerful an air as possible to encourage his family. For weeks, he had been regaling the children with fabulous tales of America. Mostly off the top of his head. At this stage, his four boys were actually quite excited by the idea of their father's coming adventure. Their humour was sustained by Madden making a great show that evening of placing each of his sons on his knee and asking them what they would like to have the following Christmas when the dollars poured in. Everything from cowboy suits to bicycles got a mention.

His youngest child, and only daughter, four-year-old Shelia, held back, finger in mouth, and listened in wide-eyed wonder to her brothers' enthusiastic descriptions of the treasures to be obtained in this mysterious place her father was going to. She found all the commotion quite incomprehensible and remained unaffected by the excitement. She didn't understand what America meant, nor could she conceive what a year was. All she knew for certain was that the daddy she loved was leaving her and, promises of treasures to come or no, she felt an indefinable tug of rejection. Madden adored his Shelia and was perceptive to her moods. Her unusual quietness did not go unnoticed, nor the fact that for days she had been studying him intently with those massive green eyes.

Madden eventually managed to pack the lads off to bed. Though his heart was as lead, he maintained his composure for their sake. He would be gone before they rose for school in the morning. Returning to his favourite chair by the fire, he sat down heavily and looked at his daughter. She looked shyly back and for a moment only the ticking of the clock could be heard. Then, wordlessly, he put out his arms and she padded over to him to be swept up and placed gently on his knee. Madden sat quietly for some time soothing her and stroking her hair. She loved these affirmations of his affection and the familiar scents of tobacco, leather and shaving soap reassured her.

After a while, she rallied and visibly cheered. When at last her time came to be put to bed, Madden asked her what she'd like Santa to bring next Christmas. Shelia looked directly into his eyes with her own sparkling emeralds and with immense gravity whispered, "Shiny wellies".

For a moment, her father just looked at her, blinked, looked, blinked again and asked, "What are those, pet?"

"Shiny wellies," she repeated as if unsure of herself, while trying to gauge the answer in his eyes. Madden was about to ask her to explain herself but, seeing the look on her face, he thought better of it and smiling broadly promised that Santa would be extra generous next Christmas. He still hadn't a clue what she was on about but she went off to bed happy enough.

Later that evening, Mary walked in with a pot of tea and a plate of sandwiches to find her husband staring into the fire. Filling a cup he asked her if she knew what was meant by shiny wellies. Mary sat beside him cradling a steaming mug in both hands and said matter-of-factly, "Shiny Wellington boots".

Madden looked at her quizzically and she went on to explain that Shelia was embarrassed at having to wear a tatty pair of Wellingtons to her infants' class when most of the other girls had shoes. The previous month when shopping in town with her mother, Shelia had spied a gaudy pair of bright red Wellingtons that she decided then and there were the height of fashion. She'd gone on like

a little chatterbox for days afterwards about them but to hard-pressed and practical Mary six quid extra for a pair of child's Wellingtons was out of the question. Mary took another sip of tea and looked absently at the fire. "Funny now," she sighed, "I thought she'd have forgotten that long ago."

Madden's shoulders sank, his face flushed with humiliation. That one small incident suddenly encapsulated for him everything he hated about what his life had become. It wasn't the Wellingtons as much. Sure the wee girl had to cross wet fields to get to school and what else could they do? No, it was much more the sudden realisation that his family must have suffered in a myriad of surreptitious ways that he could never have even guessed at. The very idea that his darling Shelia would feel embarrassed as a result of what he saw as his own inadequacy as a provider simply crushed him. It crushed him infinitely more than anything he had suffered to date, though his life had been a catalogue of hardship. He wondered what other disappointments, beyond the merely obvious, his wife and children had to cope with. How else had he failed her? His eyes burned hot and misted. Mary, only half understanding, moved to comfort him.

His eyes were still burning when the intercom announced that his platform would be reached in two minutes. Perversely, as much as he now loathed it, he wished the journey was longer. For every turn of the axles, every clanking clang of steel on steel brought him

nearer — nearer to the back-breaking labour, the insufferable heat, the dripping humidity, the bottomless mixer, and that busy little bastard of a foreman.

He had no 'green card', no insurance, and still no security. If he so much as broke a leg, he was a goner. Worse, he was no closer to bringing the family over. It had taken him longer than expected to get even this far. Still, maybe next year.

As the carriage doors opened on the climate-controlled car, he could feel a blast of hot air envelope him. Joining the crush down the rickety wooden steps to street level, he was met by the now familiar vaporous broth of carbon monoxide and diesel which the muggy temperatures only intensified. He crossed the street to the construction site with a healthy regard for the neurotic downtown drivers. A sheet of sweat was already cascading down his face and back when he glanced at his watch and murmured, "Christ, not even half-seven!"

Life was hard, true enough, but at least he now had hope and prospects that he hadn't at home. He'd had to put up with a lot and swallow a lot in the past year and he knew he would have to swallow a lot more before he saw things right. But sure a wife and five children is great sauce. ■

John Crawley  
(Portlaoise)



# ON THE BLANKET

Leo Green was one of the seven men who went on hunger-strike in Long Kesh on October 27th 1980. Here he describes life 'on the Blanket' and the events which led to the decision to embark on a hunger-strike.

I was on remand in Long Kesh when I first came into contact with the Blanketmen in the visits area of the gaol. After meeting two of them, I remember thinking how gaunt they looked. I noticed also that both had a nervous way with them and how all this contrasted starkly with their much-repeated assurances to us on remand that the protest was 'a gift' or 'no problem'.

In March 1978, the 'no-wash' phase of the protest began and it quickly quelled any rising doubts about how far off victory might be. This escalation seemed likely, we thought, to force the issue to conclusion. I wondered for a few weeks if I would even make it onto the Blanket before it was successfully wound up and Republican POWs returned to the cages. I listened one evening to a radio interview with a doctor about the possibility of an outbreak of disease as a consequence of the worsening hygiene situation in the H-Blocks. His assertion that the human body, with its own intrinsic cleaning mechanism, could survive indefinitely and free from serious disease in such conditions convinced me of nothing more than to revise my estimate of how much longer the Blanket would last, from a few weeks to a few months. I wasn't even disappointed. I would make it onto the Blanket after all.

I was sentenced in April 1978 and went on the protest in H3. After a month or so, the wing was moved to H4. Conditions were getting worse all the time. In contrast with this, the *scéal* (news), all rumours of course, was good and morale was consequently high. Some of the rumours arose from a cocktail of wild optimism and exaggerated truth. At one point it seemed the American dockers could (and soon would!) dictate all British policy in Ireland. We heard that they supported the men in the H-Blocks and

the women in Armagh and would soon boycott all British goods until we were granted political status. Alongside such fanciful notions were the deliberate 'mixes' by the numerous jokers among us. For days we pondered the rising-up of dockers all over the world on our behalf till someone spiked the latest *scéal* that the Swiss dockers had joined the 'Smash H-Block' bandwagon with the revelation that Switzerland was landlocked!

Once the wing-shifts began (whereby all the men in one wing were moved to a clean wing) everything deteriorated at an accelerated pace. The wing-shifts gave the screws an excuse for physical contact, an excuse for beatings. A shift meant, at best, a rough body-search or, at worst, a bad beating. My first experience of a search during a wing-shift was a shock. I was taken to an empty cell. There, six screws held my arms and legs, raised me from the ground, turned me upside down and opened my legs like a pair of scissors. After that I knew they were capable of anything.

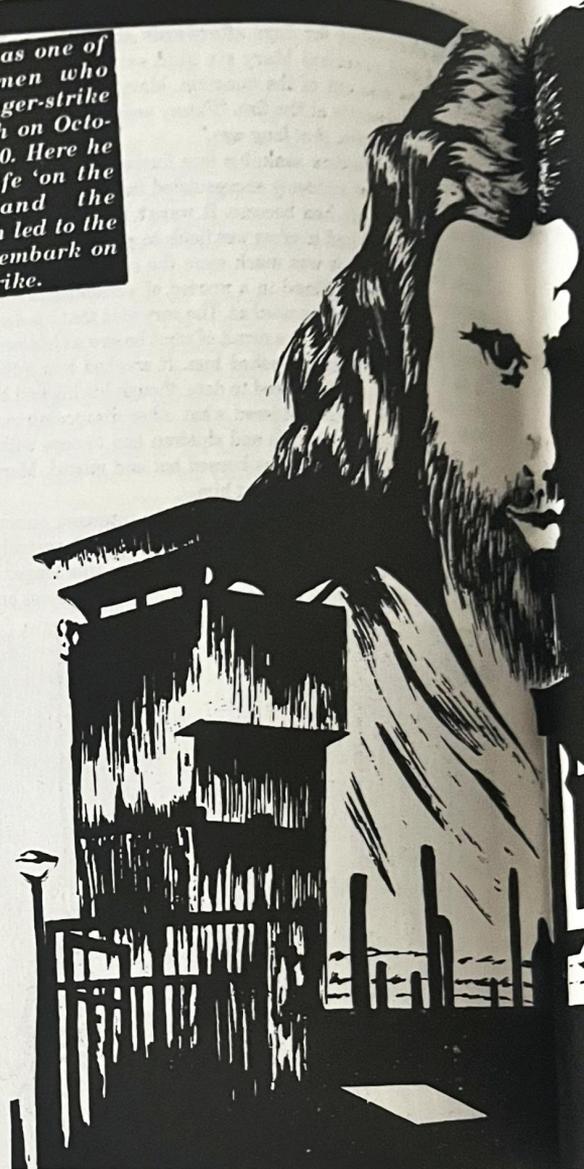
The 'force-washing' took place around Christmas 1978. The atmosphere in the Block became very tense. We had been anticipating it for a few weeks. By the time it began we were all keyed up. The Blanket taught us there were indeed worse things than a physical beating — waiting for it was such a thing. Knowing that what was expected by way of a beating rarely matched what actually materialised did little to di-

minish the feeling of helplessness and vulnerability, which grew with the noise of each successive beating as man after man was dragged from his cell and a similar fate for yourself edged six feet closer.

The screws had a well-rehearsed routine for entering cells and hauling out the occupants. They had little cause to be apprehensive. Six or eight of them would rush the cell, pin the two men to the floor and kick and punch them. Then they'd drag each separately down the wing to the wash area. They went from cell to cell in a systematic fashion. There was one notable exception. On this occasion they literally tiptoed down the wing, noiselessly

slipped the key into the cell door, opened it and stormed the cell, out of sequence and without forewarning. The occupant was Kieran Doherty. Doc was well over six feet tall and not someone they were prepared to take a chance with. They caught him unawares. This 'ambush' on Doc was actually a morale booster to the rest of us, a timely reminder of something we already knew. The noise of each successive beating had made us tense, nervous maybe, but it was the screws who were the cowards.

In early 1979, the gaol administration drew upon yet another humiliation tactic, yet another excuse for organised beatings. Prior to this, men were permitted to



we stood for. At other times they were systematic, obviously organised and measured in degree and, therefore, clearly an instrument of NIO prison policy.

My own experience of brutality at its most intense occurred in the last two weeks of April 1979 — one of those weeks is indelibly etched in the memory of the POWs who were in H4 at the time as 'an seachtain dona' (the bad week). By then incidents of ill-treatment and attacks on prisoners in H4 were almost a daily occurrence. During these two particular weeks, the situation boiled over and seemed to have gone irretrievably out of control and likely to result in the serious injury of some or many prisoners.

In mid-April, two screws had been executed, one by the IRA in Tyrone and the other, a woman, by the INLA in Armagh. We had long been accustomed to the screws exacting revenge on us in the wake of such attacks on the outside. Usually the gaol administration had simply turned a blind eye. On this occasion, they appeared to have given it a stamp of approval. For a few days they ensured a tense uneasy calm in the Block. They then withdrew the Block PO (Principal Officer) and SO (Senior Officer), the two senior screws charged with the running of the Block. Gaol management handed over control of the Block to ordinary screws for the next two weeks.

For the first of these, the screws ran rampant. In a period of ten days, something like 150 incidents occurred in which men were assaulted. In our wing, someone was assaulted almost every time a door was opened. The place was like a morgue, the silence disturbed only by the sound of beatings or the collective sigh of relief which went up each evening at 8.30 when the screws left the Block to be replaced by the night guard.

On Sundays, when we all came together for Mass in the canteen, it was usually like the tower of Babel. That Sunday after *an seachtain dona*, it was more like the tower of Pisa — none of us very sure just how much longer we could hang on. I remember well the faces that day. I took some reassurance from seeing

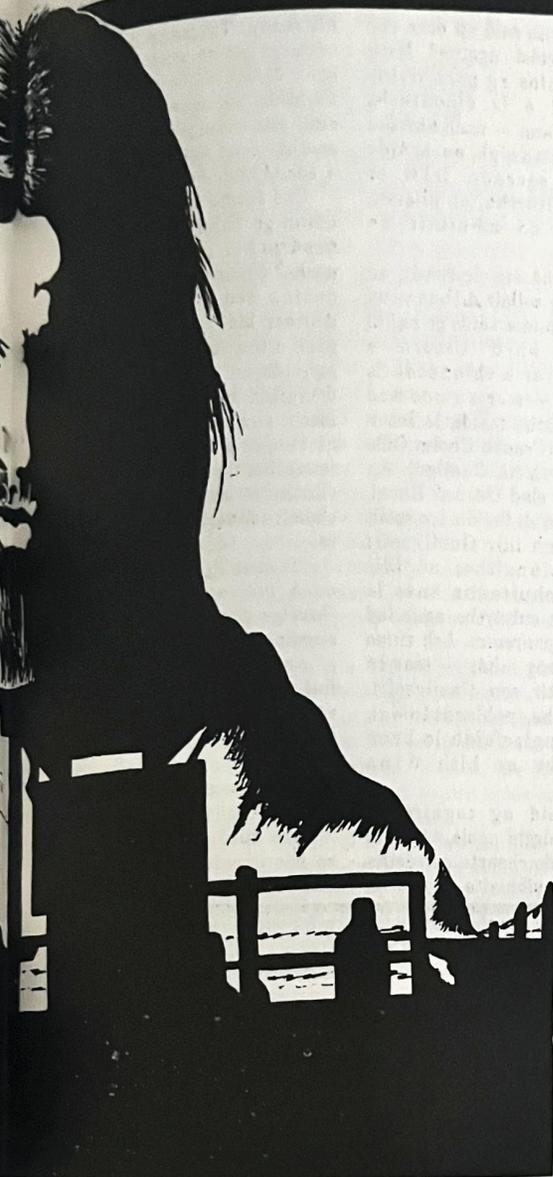
that others were as shaken as myself by what was happening. There were no smiles, no longer any cause for, or pretence of, optimism. The *scéal maith*, the American dockers, the other optimistic rumours were all, by then, an age away.

April 1979 was the culmination of a politically chastening process which had been underway for the previous six months. The harassment and ill-treatment we had endured had shorn us of our naivety. The light at the end of the tunnel we had heard about so often in messages of support seemed altogether extinguished. Our protest as it stood showed little sign of bringing about the conclusion we sought. We were in a corner and becoming increasingly aware of it.

My own view of a hunger-strike alternated somewhat during my time on the Blanket. Initially, I had believed that the Blanket protest, by its own steam, would bring about a restoration of status and, therefore, the merits of a hunger-strike were academic. By mid-1980, such illusions were long gone. The intensity of all that had occurred in the intervening period by way of attempts to break us had convinced me that some would die on hunger-strike before it swung the pendulum our way and forced the Brits to concede. I felt uncomfortable at the thought of anyone paying such a price and uneasy that we were edging towards what could well be a last-ditch stand. But a hunger-strike was inevitable. The mood in the Blocks was for it. The spark of optimism, which had been rekindled by Cardinal O Fiaich's dialogue on the situation with Humphrey Atkins (the British Secretary of State), had waned due to the Brits' stalling tactics and been completely killed off by their eventual arrogant dismissal of the Cardinal's suggestions.

Many had for long dug deep within themselves in search of reserves to help them endure the protest. The well for some was slowly drying up. The choice was stark: to sit and hope that a solution would fall into our lap or to go for one final intensification of the fight for political recognition.

In effect, no choice at all!



wear towels while outside their cells on occasions such as searches or wing-shifts. This facility was withdrawn. Anyone outside his cell would have to wear prison gear or be naked. This was another blatant attack on personal dignity. Cell-searches were reintroduced with the purpose of either forcing home the policy or simply launching physical attacks on us. We refused to leave the cells without towels. Resultant beatings were intense for up to two weeks, before our refusal to comply forced an abandonment of the policy. Victories, no matter how small, were all the more sweet in those days.

Brutality, an ever-present feature of life on the Blanket,

varied in intensity from wing to wing and Block to Block at any given time. If you were not experiencing it first hand, you were waiting for it or, at the very least, hearing about it when the account of the daily happenings in any wing were shouted to the other wings or Blocks at night-time. Even in periods of relative calm, the threat of resumed or increased brutality hung over the place like a shadow. And for good reason. Naked defenceless prisoners were easy prey on whom loyalist screws could vent their bigotry or strike back for IRA attacks on the Prison Officers Association. At times beatings were simply a manifestation of the screws' hatred of all

# Rás grinn na streachailte

I mbliana, ar an 11 Lúnasa, bhí ár rás urraithe againn arís, nó an rás grinn mar a bheireann na neamh-reathaithe air. Cé gurb é an chéad aidhm ná airgead a thógáil do bhunscoileanna lán-Ghaelacha sna Sé Chontae, ná déanaimis dear-mad go raibh, agus go bhfuil, rudaí eile san áireamh. (Ní hé cloig na fadharcáin atá i gceist agam ach oiread — sin scéal do lá éigin eile). Lasmuigh den aigead bhí dúil againn go gcuirfeadh an ócáid seo an chlaontacht chultúrtha in agaidh na Gaeilge os comhair an tsaoil, chan amháin ar an taobh seo den bhalla ach ar an taobh eile chomh maith, go mór mhór i measc daoine a bhfuil suim sa teanga acu.

Cé go raibh méadú mór maidir le daoine agus áiteanna ag glacadh páirte sa rás (na mná i Maigh gCabraí agus Seosamh O Dochartaigh sna Stáit Aontaithe mar shampla) agus cé gur léir go raibh ag méadú fosta ar an tsuim sa rás agus ar an tuiscint do na cúiseanna taobh

thiar de ar fud na tíre — tharla rud a thaispeáin nach raibh Oifig Thuaisceart Éireann (OTE) ar aon intinn linn, agus a léiríonn nach mbeidh siad ar aon intinn linn go deo — bhain said deontas de Glór na nGael i mBéal Feirste Thiar.

D'fhéadfá a rá gur ghoid sin ar dtoirneach. Ach ar ghoid?

Nach ndearna said an dara rud a bhí i gceist againn? Nach bhfuil a fhios ag gach duine anois cad é is claontacht chultúrtha ann — nach bhfuil a fhios ag madaigh na sráide anois cá seasann OTE ar chearta cultúrtha, do pháistí, mná, fir, do mhuintir na hÉireann?

Ach ní hé sin deireadh an scéil. Tá sé soiléir ó thuaraisc na meán chumarsáide go bhfuil OTE faoi bhrú 'U-turn' a dhéanamh ar a chinneadh is deireannaf — mar a rinne siad cheana i nDoire maidir le Teach an Choilm (Craobh Cholm Cille de Chonradh na Gaeilge). An ndéanfaidh siad U-turn? Bhuel, shíl siad gurbh fhéidir leo scoilt a dhéanamh idir Gaeilgeoirí agus náisiúnaithe; nó idir daoine a chuireann suas le daorsmacht cultúrtha agus iad súid nach guireann. Ach rinne said meancóg mhór — mar tá daoine sa tír, seo, Gaeilgeoirí, náisiúnaithe, poblachtánaigh srl, nach nglacfaidh le haon daorsmacht ar bith ó na Sasanaigh.

Níl muid ag tagairt do dheontais airgid anois, tá muid ag tagairt do chearta cultúrtha agus cearta sibhialta phobal na

hÉireann. Tuigeann daoine a oibríonn leis na páistí sin, tuigean daoine a oibríonn le Glór na nGael sin agus tuigeann na cimi sin — tuigimid uilig gur saothar crua agus bóthar fada é, ach tá muid ar an bhóthar.

Cad faoina daoine a infuinn dúinn go bhfuil na Sasanaigh neodrach i gcúrsaí Éireannacha? Chuir cinneadh OTE na daoine seo i bponc mar a deirtear. Más iontach le rá é, tuigimid go raí i gceist an aghaidh na Sasanaigh. Ach an dtuigfidh siad cad é is daorsmacht ann — An dtuigfidh siad cé chomh deacair is a tá an tstreachailt le bhunscoileanna a chothú — an dtuigfidh siad chomh tabhachtach is atá sé a rá:

*"Is mise Aisling; Is Éireannach mé; agus labhraítear Gaeilge i scoil is i dteach s'againne."*

An dtuigfidh siad nach bhfuil sa rás grinn ach coiscéim i rás mór taobh amuigh den bhalla seo, an Ghaeilge a chothú agus ní aon duaiseanna ann? 'Sé glacadh páirte an rud is tabhachtach! ■

Leo súid a bhí páirteach sa rás urraithe, Sciathán A, H5.

## Fun run or hard struggle?

This year, on August 11th, we again held our sponsored run, or 'Fun Run' as the non-runners refer to it! Although the immediate aim of this run is to raise money for the *bunscoileanna* [Irish-language primary schools] in the Six Counties, let's not forget that there were and are other reasons besides. (Blisters and corns are not the issue here — that's a story for another day). Besides the money, we had expectations that this event would highlight the issue of cultural discrimination, not just inside the prison walls but on the outside too, especially amongst people who have an interest in the language.

While there was a large increase in the number of people who took part in the run, which included the women in Maghberry and Joe Doherty in the US, and while it was clear to be seen that interest in the run and respect for the reasoning behind it was increasing

throughout the country, something happened which showed that the Northern Ireland Office are not of the same mind as us and which revealed that they will never be of the same mind — the withdrawal of grant aid from *Glór na nGael* in West Belfast.

You might say that our thunder was stolen, but was it? Haven't they done what we intended to do — publicise? Doesn't everyone now know that cultural discrimination exists? Don't the very dogs in the street now know where the NIO stand on cultural rights for children, women, men, for all Irish people?

But that's not the end of the story. It is clear from media reports that the NIO are under pressure to do a U-turn on this latest decision — as they have already done in the case of Dove House in Derry (*Craobh Cholm Cille Conradh na nGaeilge*). Will they make a U-turn? Well, they thought they could cause a split between *Gaeilgeoirí* [Irish speakers], between Nationalists, or between people who tolerate cultural oppression and those who do not. However, they have made a big mistake because there are people in this country, *Gaeilgeoirí*, Nationalists, Republicans, etc, who will not accept any oppression in the least from the British.

We are not referring now to a money grant. People who

work with *Glór na nGael* understand that. The prisoners understand that. We must also understand that it will be a long hard struggle, but at least we are on the road. And what about the people who tell us that the British are neutral in Irish affairs? The NIO decision has put these people in a fix, so to speak. Strange as it may seem, they have been compelled to murmur something against the British, but will they understand what oppression is? Will they understand how hard the struggle to maintain *bunscoileanna* is? Will they understand how important it is to say:

*"I am Aisling; I am Irish; and Gaeilge is the language spoke in our scoil and in our home."*

Will they understand that the Fun Run is just one step in a great race outside of these walls to promote the *Gaeilge*, and there are no prizes for it? Taking part is what is most important! ■

By the Fun Run participants, A-Wing, H5.

# JOYRIDING

Daredevil exuberance or anti-social behaviour? It's not hard to answer that question when a stolen car screeches past you at 90mph. If you are the parent of young children whose area is the local 'racetrack', you would be quite entitled to class joyriding as anti-social behaviour.

Every night in Belfast, joyriders rally the latest BMWs, Volvos and Escorts through the Nationalist areas, safe in the knowledge that they are not top of the RUC priority list. Two pedestrians have been killed and 34 injured over a three-year period and some families have had lucky escapes when cars have crashed into their living rooms or bedrooms. It is a serious and dangerous problem and in some areas local people are afraid to venture out after dark when the roads and pathways become the territory of the joyrider.

But it is not only the local residents who suffer. There are also the victims whose cars are stolen and often destroyed. The usual conclusion to a night's joyriding is to burn the car — very rarely are they recovered undamaged.

In a society not engaged in a war with an army of occupation, the state would ensure that every legal mechanism would be used to prevent joyriders intimidating and terrorising their community. Yet in the Six Counties, and West Belfast in particular, this activity is allowed to proceed unchecked. Indeed, the RUC consider joyriders a group from which they can recruit spies and informers to gain low-level intelligence on Republicans.

On many occasions, the RUC Special Branch have released arrested joyriders without bringing charges, on condition that they go back to their community and report the movements and associates of named local people. Some agree to work for the RUC while in custody but then report what has happened to a solicitor or to Sinn Féin. Others have been exposed and ordered to leave the country. By passing information to the RUC — and thus, in many cases, to Loyalist murder gangs — they are endangering the lives of people in their community.

Since 1978, nine joyriders\* have been shot dead and scores more seriously injured when cars they were riding in were shot at by the RUC and British army/UDR — so what encourages these young people to risk their lives for a spin in a fast car?

To understand joyriding, it is necessary to look beyond the young people involved. The individual joyrider emerges from a complex mix of social deprivation, poor educational facilities, lack of permanent meaningful employment and, due to the ongoing war in the Six Counties, a flippant attitude to all forms of authority. The joyrider, like everyone in West Belfast, suffers from a wide range of social injustices because s/he comes from a Nationalist area in a city which has a Unionist-controlled council. Being deprived of opportunities from an early age can lead to children feeling alienated from society — so why should they invest positively in its social life?

In the education system, children are categorised into classes of those most likely to pass the 11+ exam, and those most likely to fail. Those deemed 'failures' receive a second-rate education. By neglecting and labelling children at this early stage, the education system must surely bear some responsibility when children it has supposedly educated turn on their own communities.

Unemployment in West Belfast is among the highest in Europe and school-leavers have difficulty finding employment, regardless of whether or not they have qualifications. In order to defuse the public outcry over unemployment, the British government have created optical illusions in the form of Youth Training Programme schemes and Access to Community Employment programmes. These schemes not only provide cheap labour, they give the government

the opportunity to massage the unemployment figures. School leavers in these schemes earn around £30 per week, which is to cover the cost of all their clothes, board and lodgings, etc., as well as provide some type of social life.

In a consumer-oriented society where all facilities cost money, it is not surprising that some young people will turn to crime. A study of young joyriders has shown that many of them turn to crime out of boredom and lack of money.

There are different stages of development within the joyriders' subculture. The beginners watch the older ones 'having good craic', drinking their cheap carry-outs of wine and cider, and if the big lads are in good form they may take their young admirers for a spin. This then leads to the second stage of development — the young observers themselves steal and drive cars for joyriding. These young people are now on their way to becoming social outcasts in a community which has no sympathy for joyriding or those involved in it.

Once the joyrider is alienated in this way the third stage of development into petty crime quickly takes place. This is when cars are stolen for more than simply joyriding. The 'Fagins' and fences are quick to exploit any situation which offers easy money and so the joyrider becomes prey to these unscrupulous characters whom they supply with choice parts for a small financial reward.

Local people, sick of the intimidation, danger and damage caused by joyriding, turn to the Republican Movement demanding that the IRA take action. Persistent joyriders are then beaten up or shot. For carrying out this community-endorsed action, the Republican Movement has come under attack from opportunistic political parties, such as the SDLP and the Workers' Party, who moralise on the injustice done to joyriders. While they do not condone joyriding, these parties believe the RUC should be left to deal with the problem, a solution which has no credibility among the people.

It is possible to have sympathy for young people who steal and drive fast cars in order to introduce some excitement into their lives. After all, doesn't every cheap video promote the thrills of a car chase? But sympathy and understanding run out for those joyriders who are aware of the harm and suffering they are causing and who revel in it. The people of West Belfast have all suffered from social injustices and many have taken the path of opposing the system which is responsible. They suffer injustice every day at the hands of the RUC and British army — they do not need those who turn on their own communities and add to the suffering already there.

What is needed is a solution to joyriding. It has become recognised within the Republican Movement that punishing joyriders is not a long-term solution. Punishments are only tackling symptoms, not causes. Our communities know that the state is not interested in solving joyriding — it is a problem which they must tackle themselves. No-one believes for a moment that this is an easy task. It is going to be a long battle which must be approached with careful thought. It will require the community to understand all aspects of joyriding and the root causes of why it happens. Any strategy to defeat it must be grounded in a full understanding of the problem. The community must then put forward people who are willing to learn the skills which community activists need to put any plan into action.

Joyriding, like other social problems, has grown out of the system under which we have been forced to live. Only with self-determination for our country can we truly take control of our lives. But we can begin now to lay the foundation by working for change within our own communities. ■

Noel Garlick  
(Long Kesh)

\*On Sunday, September 30th, shortly after this article was received for publication, Martin Peake (17) and Karen Reilly (18) were shot dead and a second teenage girl was seriously wounded when British army Paratroopers opened fire on a stolen car travelling along the Glen Road in West Belfast. Despite British army claims that the car had failed to stop at a security roadblock, eyewitnesses insisted that no roadblock had been set up and that the Paratroopers had opened fire without warning.

# Inside Out Inside Out Inside Out Inside Out Inside

## Tall in the saddle

Maybe I'm just a begrudger, because every time a rich man (or woman, for that matter) goes to prison I barely suppress my urge to cheer — actually I run back to my cell and bite my pillow to muffle the yelps. Only a begrudger would laugh at another person's misfortune. Recently, I was confronted with this dilemma once more when poor old Ernest (had his parents a sense of humour!) Saunders of Guinness fame went down for a stretch.

**H**is misdemeanour? Apart from being caught, it was insider dealing, which is 'richspeak' for thieving.

How was he caught? Another insider dealer, one Mr Paul Boesky, became an insider squealer for the US Treasury Department. In his attempt to stay outside, Paul decided to wipe the slate clean and related the story of Michael Milken (I can't resist it — surely that should be Milk'em!) who

then agreed to pay back \$500-million, and that was before the Treasury boys even asked him any questions. I think they are still counting the money. After that Paul told them about the phoney takeover of Distillers by Ernest & Co. This time it was only £100 million. All in all a nice little 'ern-er'!

Yet here I am now feeling sorry for Mr Saunders. Well, he is a bit of a scape-goat. This sort of thing has been going on for years

in every stock exchange the world over. Of course, it is dressed up in the designer language of asset stripping, junk bonding, underwriting public share allocations, etc, etc. To misquote Brendan Behan for financial purposes: The bigger the theft, the more acceptable the thief.

However, any sympathy I have for Saunders is misplaced. For this same thief was involved in cheating thousands of small investors out of millions of their hard-earned (no pun intended) savings. At that time, we were told it was a case of legitimate risk-taking and misreading the market trends. Times change. Or do they? Or is it that there is a lingering smell of scandal all the way to the British government in there somewhere? There was no big trial then, no media circus or nightly reports as to what haute couture the spouses of the thieves were wearing.

Cheer up Ernest, at least you took it on the chin and resisted a Paul Boesky squealer deal. I'm sure you are well used to the inside by now. Some things never change.

Another thing which caught my eye during the trial was the judge's summing up and in particular this:

*"When men are hellbent on victory, greed is in the saddle."*

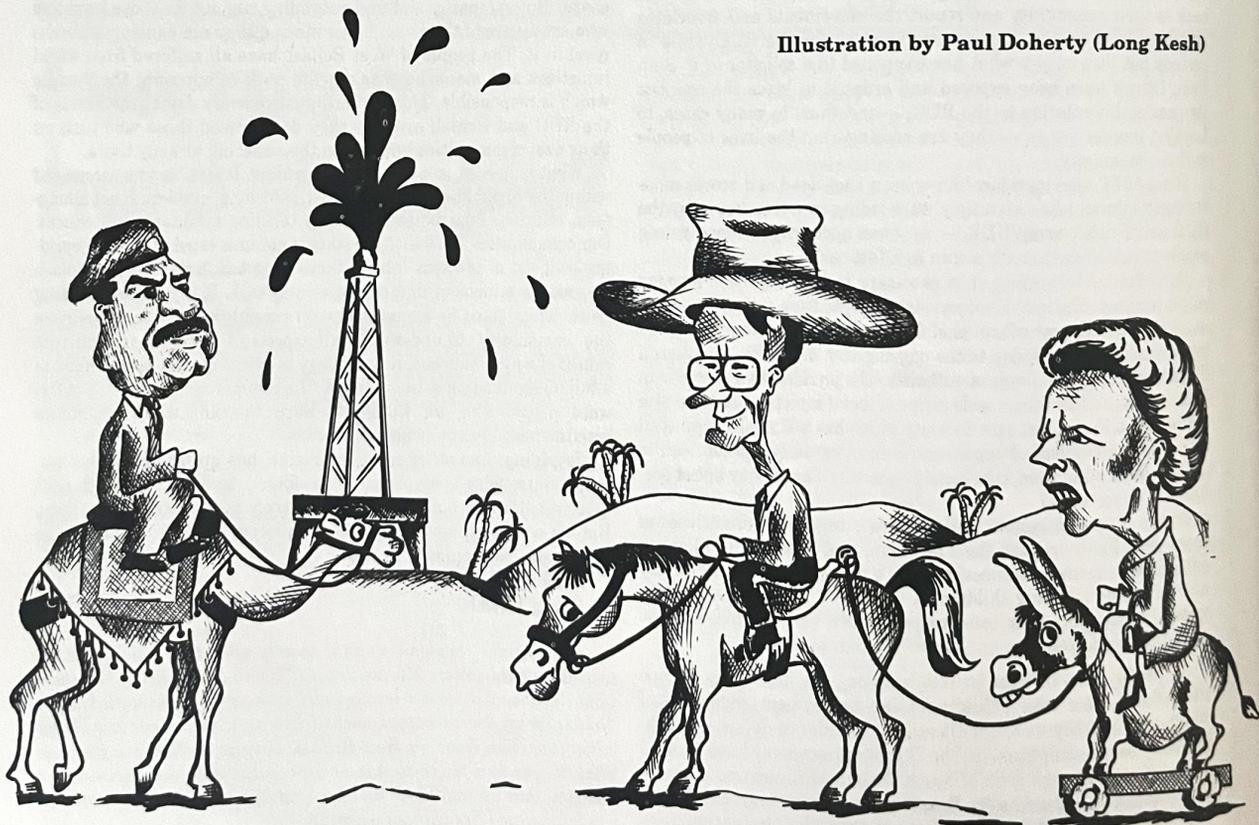
This gem of wisdom could provide the standard mitigation in all financial cases in the future. If only Sir Lester Piggott had it in his hour of need (judicial, not fiscal), he could have jiggled it about a bit and come up with:

*'I was hellbent on greed, so after each victory I hid the money in the saddle.'*

Not Lester. As Ken Dodd would now tell you, the tried and trusted mattress appeals better to the juries.

But back to greed and victory. It brings me to the Gulf crisis. Now, this is complex. Take your time and you may get it

Illustration by Paul Doherty (Long Kesh)



before the next issue is due.

Iraq says Kuwait is Iraq's. Iraq takes Kuwait back. The World Policeman (as in the song: '...the bullets still read US of A') says that no country has the right to invade another country unless it begins with G for Grenada or P for Panama. PC Bush tells us further that Saddam Hussein (No 1 Iraqi) is the new Hitler (there have been almost as many new Hitlers as there have been new Peles). Yet when Iraq was at war with Iran — the Yanks really hate Iran — Saddam didn't seem to be Hitleresque. After all, he did get his guns and bombs from somewhere and Bobby Bush's constabulary appeared not to mind at all.

Then we have Syria, who, according to the constabulary, are 'the financiers of international terror, of Abu Nidal, ...spñsors of the Lockerbie bombing... pariahs... outcasts...'. Therefore, the US and Syria have no diplomatic relations. Consistent enough.

In the meantime, Syria has

let it be known that it would really love to send some troopers to purge Kuwait of Saddam and his Gestapo. PC Bush's reply? 'Come on down!' and he immediately despatches one of his big deputies to Syria to let them know they aren't all they are bummed up to be. Just a bit of bad press. Inconsistent enough?

Next, we have King Hussein and Jordan. Well, in the interests of kindness I'll merely reflect that the oft-quoted phrase 'He doesn't know if he is blew up or stuffed' was coined with the King in mind.

Then we are in there somewhere. No party without the Irish dimension and we have Larry Goodman (which he isn't) to thank. How? Why? There is mad cow's disease about and I don't want to be accused of being a carrier.

It gets worse! Enter Iran again. Iran hates the Yanks even more than the Yanks hate Iran. Iran says that, while it still hates Iraq, it hopes Iraq beats the hell out of the Yanks (do Muslims have a hell? I'll get

an opinion on that from Salman Rushdie). It's a sort of, 'If my enemy's enemy is my worst enemy, then my enemy and I can be friendly enemies.' Try that for consistency!

Analysis? I just gave up. Indeed, I'd become so cynical about it all that I had to admit it to myself and go along to the wing's Cynics Anonymous meeting and confide in them. 'My name is Raymond. I am a cynic.' A dozen heads (it was poorly attended that night) nodded a distinct 'don't worry, we've been there too' message. Strewn across the floor were reams of newspapers carrying countless analyses of *Iraq v The Rest of the World* (with Iran, well...) and not even a mention of the Faroe Islands.

Then it happened. One night we, Cyn Anon, were all around our TV when the news of the Guinness Four came through. We were 'touched' by the words of wisdom from Mr Justice Henry. Greed! Victory! Greed! Alleluia!

Greed? The vast amount of oil in Kuwait. Kuwait sup-

plied lots and lots of oil to the USA (you've heard them say, 'No Oil, No USA'). Saddam gets on his camel (well, I had to work 'saddle' in somehow!) and steals Kuwait. Now he has more oil, more money and more power. But Saddam's new-found greed means that George's greed cannot be satisfied. So, in simple terms it is a case of Greed versus Greed. The prize? Victory and the right to be classed as the greediest of them all. The Victor? George or Saddam? May they both end up in hell.

A sincere 'thank you' to Mr Justice Henry. Not only has he made the Gulf crisis a lot simpler for me and my comrades but he has cured me of my cynicism as well. I tread gently and take it one day at a time. I can be heard muttering in my sleep: *"I used to be a cynic but I'm still glad Ernest Saunders is in gaol."*

Yes, I'll always be a begrudger. ■

**Raymond McCartney**  
(Long Kesh)

## THE PRAGUE SPRING

The bear hug which crushed a spring was a mistake so many lives lost intolerable suffering because of a mistake relief nonetheless that an admission was made If mistakes are just that they shall be sources of learning and Lithuania will have a summer.

You are as irrelevant to my future as I am to yours I have no power over you and I seek none but you are unhappy to be likewise

You pretend to have an influence with the big people enabling you to pull the strings of my destiny I am relieved that you pretend

Once we move on from our present abode you are as I nothing, what will separate us and thankfully distinguish you from I is of course your craving for the means to control my life

I am not important you calmly agree you are not important you furiously dispute okay then you are important but only to yourself

**Anthony McIntyre,**  
(Long Kesh)

## TO A BUREAUCRAT

# Any port in a storm

**Bobby McCann was seventeen years old and looking forward to his first job since leaving school two months previously. Jobs were scarce in Belfast and he assured Mr Hughes, who owned the Nip Inn, that he would be the best apprentice barman he had ever employed.**

**"Y**ou're looking *gilt-edged*", he told the skinny, well-dressed youth who peered back at him from the hall-mirror and headed off to work.

Now the Nip Inn wasn't exactly the Europa but Bobby was confident — there were worse bars on the Falls Road. The Hole in the Wall was definitely worse — he had heard somewhere that you had to have a criminal record before they let you into the place. Basher McGee wouldn't even drink there and he was the hardest man in the district! No, the Nip Inn wasn't the worst.

The bar-owner introduced Bobby to the two barmen who were unenthusiastically washing glasses and cleaning tables. Neither of them even lifted their heads, until they heard the word 'apprentice'. Both of them suddenly lunged towards him, knocking each other out of the way and tripping over chairs as they came. Bobby didn't know whether to run or roll up into a ball, as his elder brothers had advised him to do when he knew he was going to get a good hiding. The young of the two, Jake O'Hara, reaching him first said, "Right, young Bobby, I will show you the ropes."

Before Bobby could offer his thanks, he found himself at the sink, surrounded by what looked like thousands of glasses. The older barman, Herbie Hanna, not to be outdone, told Bobby he could clean the tables and fix the chairs when he finished washing up. Bobby worked with gusto, and finished his work just before opening time. Jake and Herbie praised their new workmate and told him that, because he was a quick learner, he could stock all the shelves and leave the empty crates and kegs out for the brewery men. Three hours later, the now not-so-gilt-edged apprentice informed them he was finished.

"Good man yourself," said Jake, "I'm sure you could use a cup of tea." Before he could answer, Herbie told him he could make him-

self and Jake a cup while he was at it.

The afternoon wasn't so hectic. The only excitement being the new television that was being installed to replace the black-and-white one that had held pride of place for the past twenty-five years.

Bobby was behind the bar listening with fascination to two of the customers. One was telling the other that the tickman had started a terrible row with him on Friday night because he couldn't pay him. He explained to the tickman that he put his name along with the rentman, coalman, milkman, paperboy, window-cleaner and catalogue woman all into a hat — he then picked out three and paid them. Sure it wasn't his fault that the tickman hadn't been picked out in over three weeks and he went on to tell him that if he didn't stop his shouting, his name wouldn't even go into the hat next week! This is definitely the game to be in, thought Bobby, the things you learn just by listening.

The following day, Bobby was given the privilege of unlocking the front door at opening time, and the more dubious pleasure of washing the pavement, the front of the pub and all the windows. Mr Hughes was in great form. One of his customers had died and he was expecting a good bit of trade after the funeral. When the mourners started to arrive, Bobby was told by Jake to do waiter, as this would familiarise him with the names of the different drinks.

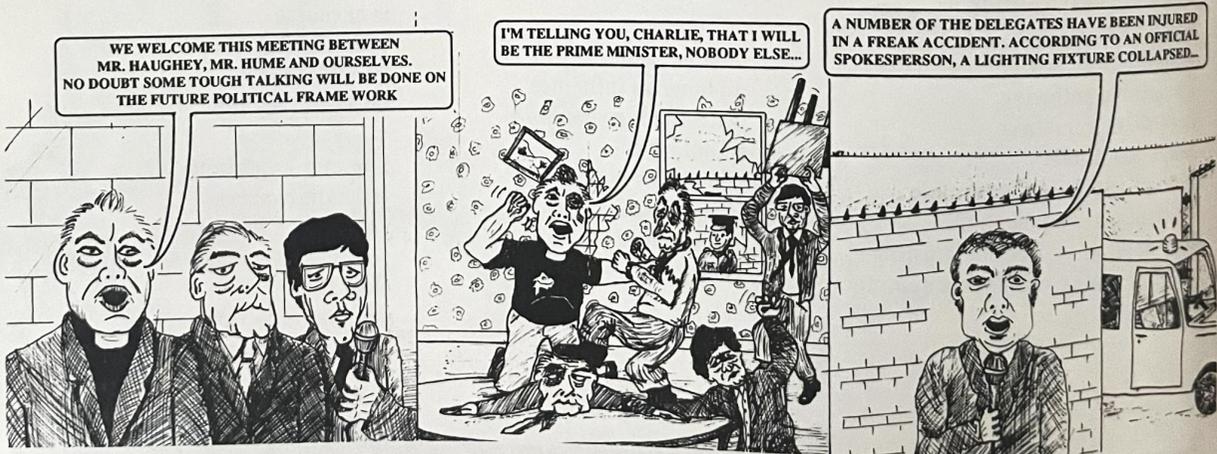
The bar was packed. There were three different sing-songs going on, the TV racing was trying to be heard, Jake had broken up two fights, and an irate wife was stomping out after receiving a rapturous round of applause for delivering her husband's dinner, wrong way up, on his head. Bobby was run off his feet, and to make matters worse, hadn't received one tip.

He was half expecting the corpse himself to make an appearance at any minute. All he had heard in the past two hours was how well he had looked in the coffin, a few punters even remarked how they had never seen him looking so well!

Jake had to call Bobby to help him behind the bar as Herbie Hanna had toasted a few too many and was now sleeping it off in the store. Jake pointed out to Bobby a man called Vulture Walsh who was still offering condolences to the bereaved relatives and telling them how good a man the deceased was.

This was Vulture's third funeral this week. Each morning he would scour the death columns of *The Irish News* (which he called his mourning paper) and pick out the name with the most insertions. It was then simply a matter of mixing with the cortege, where he gleaned all sorts of information about the corpse, and then following them back to the designated watering hole. Jake told him that Vulture had more funerals under his belt than O'Kane's undertakers, and he couldn't ever remember him buying his own drinks. There is a wealth of experience here, thought Bobby.

The bar-owner was so pleased with Bobby's progress that he told



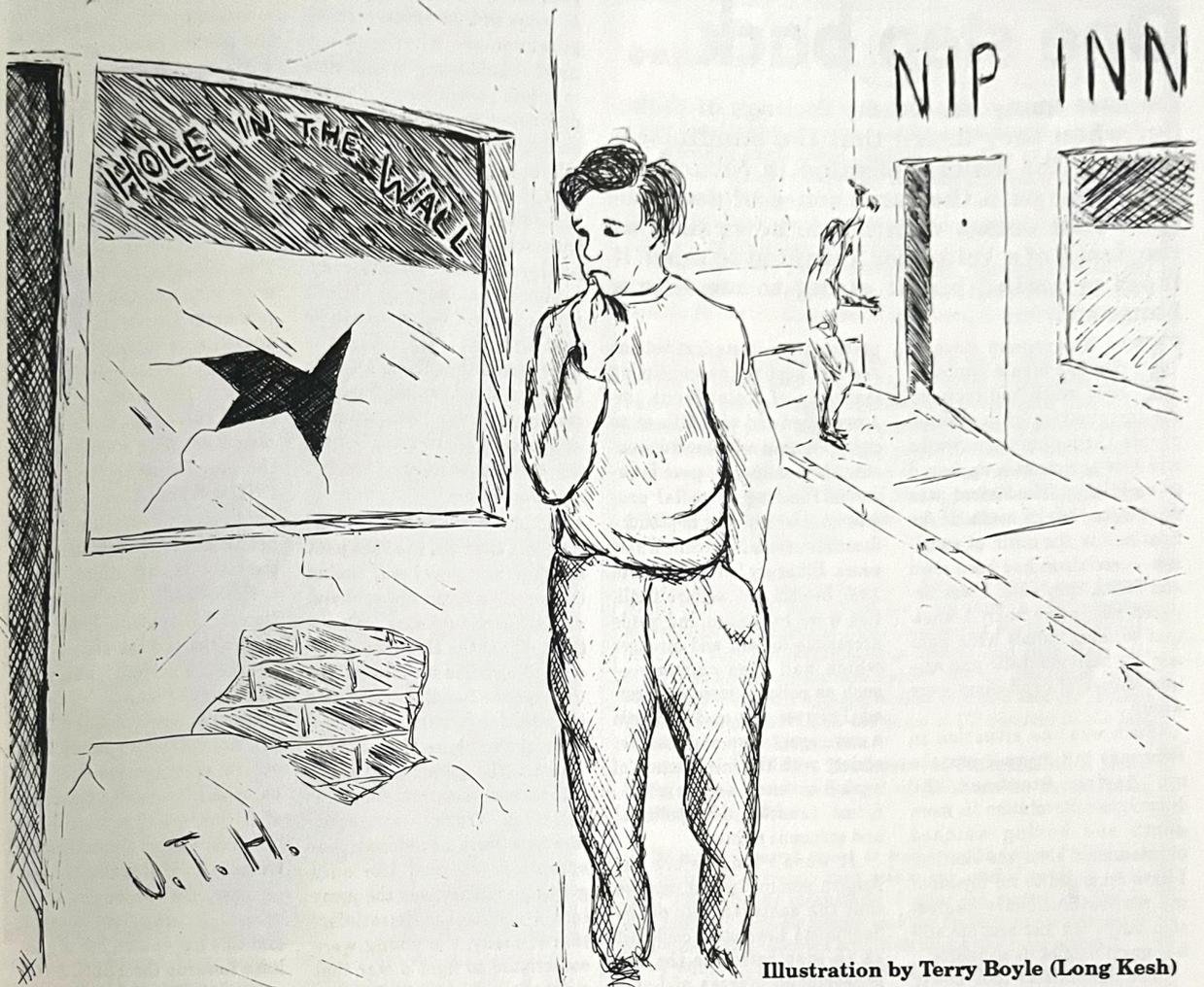


Illustration by Terry Boyle (Long Kesh)

him he could start learning to pull pints in between washing glasses and stocking the bar. Jake told him he was a natural and definitely cut out for the bar game. Whilst to Bobby the beer was no problem at all, pulling the pints of Guinness turned out to be very tricky indeed.

"You're pulling them too quick," said Jake. "You have to let them settle and simmer for a while, or you'll give some poor crater the skitters for a week."

Fra Fox, who, skitters or not, was drinking Bobby's failures, compliments of the house, told him to carry on the way he was going, he was doing a grand job. He eventually got it right and held up the perfect pint to show Fra Fox, who by this time was making a hasty retreat from the bar.

"What's that smell?" cried Bobby.

Jake told him it was the Guinness that caused it and he would get used to it. If it smells like that, thought Bobby, how can people drink the stuff?

A big day for Bobby arrived. Mr Hughes and himself were on duty that day and Bobby was told he would be running the bar for an hour or so whilst his boss was at the bank. As he left with the lodgements, he warned the apprentice that he would be held responsible for everything in the bar, and for the sixth time told him, "No strap drink, pay no bills, don't change any cheques, don't leave the till unguarded and don't be eating any crisps without paying for them."

Bobby was in his element and felt very much at ease behind the counter on his own, so much so in fact, that he was on his third free packet of crisps without feeling a pang of guilt. Two men wearing brown boiler suits came into the bar, and, after establishing that it was the Nip Inn and Mr Hughes was the owner, proceeded to disconnect the television.

They told Bobby they were from the store where the set was purchased and that Mr Hughes, who had reported it faulty, wanted it back in perfect working order for the TV racing the following day. Bobby signed their bit of paper and held the door open for them.

"Have it back before twelve tomorrow or we will be in all sorts of trouble," he told him.

The place was looking spotless, not a dirty glass, uncleaned ashtray or incriminating empty crisp bag in sight when Mr Hughes returned. Bobby was feeling quite chuffed with himself, when the boss started screaming.

"Where's the bloody TV? Don't tell me, don't tell me."

The now hysterical bar-owner walked out of the bar and came back in again, clutching a glimmer of hope that his eyes were playing tricks on him.

As the now redundant Bobby walked home, he wondered to himself if there would be any chance of a job in the Hole in the Wall. ■

Seamus Storey  
(Long Kesh)

# One step back...

**I'm sure many shared my feelings of disbelief when they heard that the Sandinistas had lost the general election in Nicaragua. It left me with the same sense of deep despair that comes with tragic news such as the death of a Volunteer. I wanted to erase it from my mind but it clung to me like a hangover.**

**T**he Nicaraguan Revolution had been a symbol of hope which had captured the imagination of oppressed people throughout the world and now the curtain appeared to be falling. The defeat was represented in the media as the final nail in the coffin of socialism — socialism had been tried and failed, they said. I was dejected but in my heart I knew that socialist values were right and the individualistic and egoistic values of capitalism were wrong.

Such was the situation in February but several months on, having examined the Nicaraguan Revolution in more depth and having watched events unfold since the election, I have managed to rid myself of my post-revolutionary depression. All is not lost and life still has much to offer us socialists.

The Sandinistas took power after a popular insurrection in 1979 and set about transforming a state which had denied

participation in its institutions and had kept the overwhelming majority of its citizens impoverished and with little or no rights. Within a backward economy, the Sandinistas gave priority in funding to social programmes which were to produce dramatic results within a few years. Illiteracy fell from 62% to 13%, health and welfare facilities were expanded and made accessible for all, and diseases which had been common — such as polio — were eradicated. Progress was made towards a more egalitarian and pluralist society with the introduction of agrarian and industrial reforms, taxation, and political and economic rights.

It wasn't long before the Reagan administration realised that the achievements of the Sandinista Revolution could act as an inspiration to the impoverished masses of Latin America and pose a real threat to US dominance. Latin America has traditionally been the

plundering field for US companies backed by successive US governments who have employed their bogey word, 'communism', to denounce every manifestation of nationalism, economic independence or social reform in the region. They have bestowed the mantle of 'Guardians of Democracy' upon themselves in order to strike against the 'totalitarian' regimes that dare to believe that a nation's resources are its own and not the USA's. It is quite ironic that the USA is so vocal about promoting democracy and yet have been staunch supporters of, to name but a few, the Khmer Rouge, Pinochet and Marcos.

To bludgeon the Sandinistas into line, the USA used the joint strategy of a proxy war (using the contras as frontline soldiers) and economic embargo. Given the might of the USA, the strategy bit hard and ultimately was to cause the Sandinistas to lose the election. Over 50% of the Nicaraguan budget was diverted to the war, forcing heavy cutbacks in social expenditure. Inflation rose, austerity measures were introduced, consumption fell and the only growing industry was the army into which, to the dissatisfaction of many, the young were conscripted to fight a war that claimed the lives of 30,000 people.

A people under siege, fighting daily for survival, were

faced with the choice of a continuation of this instability or the possibility of stability with UNO, the US-backed opposition party. Fifty-seven per cent succumbed to the appeal of UNO. It was not a vote against the revolution, nor did it represent a political or ideological identification with UNO for most of that 57%. It was a desperation vote, a longing for stability and immediate improvements in the economy. The deathly silence and absence of celebration that greeted UNO's victory testified to this. The election did not sound the death-knell for the revolution. The stability which the people desire, and which UNO will have to deliver if they are to stay in government, cannot be attained by dismantling the revolutionary state.

The FSLN (Sandinista National Liberation Front) remains the largest and only cohesive political party in Nicaragua and Violetta Chamorro, the leader of UNO, will not be able to govern without its co-operation. Her own party is made up of a coalition of 14 parties that range from the extreme right to the extreme left. With such a perverse mixture, she has found that she cannot get unity on any issue and this has caused her to gravitate towards the FSLN. As the gap with FSLN lessens, the gaps within UNO grow wider. The series of strikes in the months after the election underlined Chamorro's dependence on the Sandinistas who have the support of the workers. It also showed that the differences within UNO are becoming irreconcilable. The FSLN is committed to preserving the gains of the revolution and so, ironically, Chamorro's political life is bound up with the preservation of those gains.

The Sandinistas introduced democracy to Nicaragua and the election, rather than ending the revolution, has enabled it to survive. They could have continued in office but, as Eastern Europe has illustrated, permanence in government does not guarantee survival. The Sandinistas have drawn valuable lessons from both the election



Viva Nicaragua libre!

No pasaran!



and Eastern Europe. They have recognised that they must democratise their structures and reverse the process of bureaucratisation which, they have acknowledged, was beginning to set in and was paralysing the dynamism of the revolution. By opening up Nicaraguan society, the Sandinistas have ensured that government requires a popular consensus.

The USA will not be happy with Chamorro's association with the FSLN. To whip her into line and to compel her to dismantle the revolution, it is possible they could activate the death squads of the extreme right. If Chamorro concedes to US-orchestrated pressure, she will destroy the political consensus with the inevitable consequence that her government will fall — unless of course the USA uses its military to intervene on her

behalf. However, this would only postpone the inevitable. In the same way that governments in Eastern Europe could not survive without a political consensus, neither will US imperialism or any of its puppets. Furthermore, the time when the US was able to use the scare tactic of communism to justify its imperial aggression may have gone — events in Eastern Europe will have served to ease fears among US citizens of the 'Communist Spectre'. In particular, the bullying of Nicaragua will be difficult to justify now that the Sandinistas have democratised their society.

So, reports of the death of revolution have, as they say, been greatly exaggerated. As long as revolution remains in the consciousness of the people, it will survive. ■

**James McCann**  
(Long Kesh)

## QUOTES

*"It is the government in London which controls Northern Ireland and which therefore has the greatest responsibility for the situation there today... British handling of the crisis in Northern Ireland is the main contributing factor in the UK government's appalling record on human rights abuses. Britain has been condemned by the European Court of Human Rights more often than any other nation."*

— Bforn Cato Funnemark of the Norwegian Helsinki Committee in a report on human rights violations by Britain in the Six Counties. (*Irish Times*, August 11th, 1990.)

*"I was in Vietnam during the Vietnam War; I was in Chile, El Salvador, Guatemala — well-known names of countries on the world map where extreme violations of human rights have taken place... I have never seen such a concentration of heavily-armed soldiers and police interrogating people to such an extent and in such a manner as I experienced on my arrival here in Belfast."*

— Norwegian MP Reaulf Stein, president of the Norwegian Helsinki Committee on Human Rights. (*Irish Times*, August 11th, 1990.)

*"The Arab Ba'ath Party which Saddam heads was helped by the CIA when it first seized the Iraqi state in 1963: anxious to crush the then powerful Iraqi Communist Party, the CIA collaborated with the Ba'athist coup makers and gave them lists of communists who were then hunted down... The claim by the US to stand against aggression and invasion and for defence of international law is, on the basis of US conduct in the last decade, simply unsustainable."*

— Fred Halliday, Professor of International Relations at the London School of Economics. (*Irish Times*, August 17th, 1990.)

*"It may be several weeks or even months before I shall ask you to drench Germany with poison gas, and if we do it, let us do it 100%. In the meanwhile, I want the matter studied in cold blood by sensible people and not by that particular set of psalm-singing uniformed defeatists which one runs across."*

— Winston Churchill during World War I. (The Saddam Hussein of his day?)

*"It is fashionable to doubt whether democratic Western governments ever resort to political murder. This is a mistake."*

— Tony Geraghty. (*Weekend Guardian*, August 4th, 1990.)

*"Send all my Mandelas home and I will call for a ceasefire too."*

— Bernadette McAliskey at the 'Ireland — The Way Forward' conference responding to a call for non-violence in Ireland by a member of the Catholic Peace Action Group in the wake of the ANC's ceasefire. (*Derry Journal*, August 14th, 1990.)

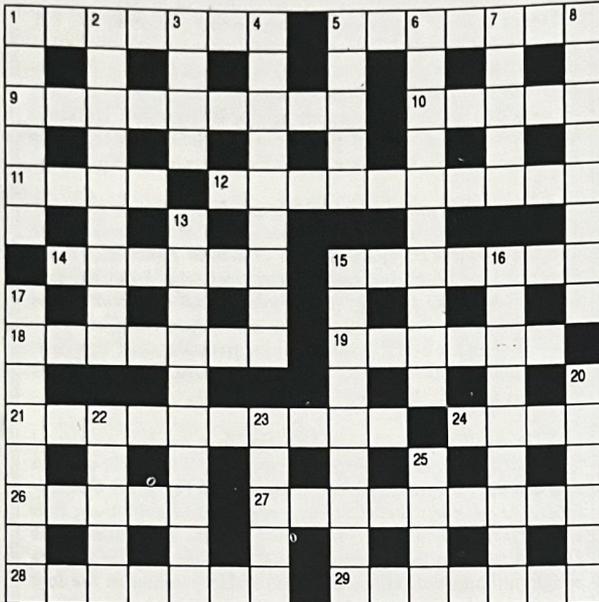
*"Responsibility in this struggle is reserved for those who pose no threat to the status quo."*

— Oliver Kearney, chairperson of the 'Ireland — The Way Forward' conference. (*Derry Journal*, August 14th, 1990.)

*"If it takes me to get shot to prove my point, I'd rather be shot than walk about and be treated like an animal by the UDR [Ulster Defence Regiment] at roadblocks."*

— Downtown Radio broadcaster Bobby Hanvey after being held by the UDR while on his way to hospital to see his mother who had been taken ill. (*The Irish News*, August 9th, 1990.)

# Crossword



### Clues Across

1. Non-jury court (7)
5. Caribbean island invaded by US (7)
9. See 22 Down
10. Fool (5)
11. Flow out (4)
12. Improvement (10)
14. Didn't hit, catch or notice (6)
15. Hold spellbound, thrill (7)
18. Opposite of condemn? (7)
19. A quick reminder offstage (6)
21. One who incites or provokes (10)
24. Mexican currency (4)
26. To put into law (5)
27. These actors might be leading ladies (9)
28. Foot lever (7)
29. ..., then rules (7)

### Clues Down

1. Dilly-dally (6)
2. Imposed by Britain in 1922 (9)
3. Woodwind instrument (4)
4. A critical situation (5-4)
5. The whole range (5)
6. Ireland's brain drain (10)
7. Not dead (5)
8. Shrewdly (8)
13. Linked, as Gaelic football clubs (10)
15. Ripped off by capitalists (9)
16. Subjugated (9)
17. Mishap (8)
20. Incites or wakens (6)
- 22 & 9 Across. Shoot-to-kill and plastic bullets are aspects of this (5, 9)
23. Conscious, knowing (5)
25. Diesel oil (4)

- Answers Down**
24. Pesa
  26. Enact
  27. Actresses
  28. Treadle
  29. Divides
- Answers Across**
1. Diplock
  5. Grenada
  9. Terrorism
  10. Idiot
  11. Enit
  12. Belterment
  14. Missed
  15. Enthal
  18. Condone
  19. Prompt
  21. Instigator

- Answers Down**
4. Knife edge
  3. Oboe
  2. Partition
  1. Dither
- Answers Across**
6. Emigration
  7. Alive
  8. Astutely
  13. Associated
  15. Exploited
  16. Reprased
  17. Accident
  20. Rouses
  22. State
  23. Aware
  25. Derv

# QUIZ

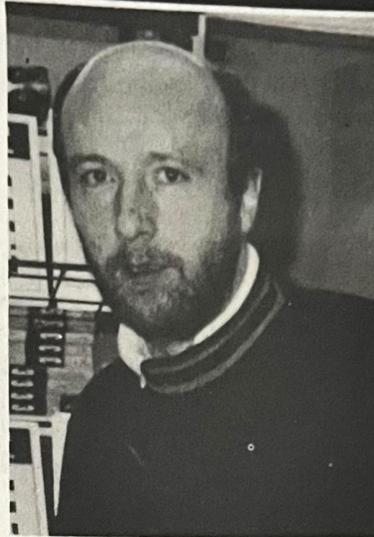
1. Who is the Zulu chief whose followers are waging a murderous campaign against ANC supporters?
2. Which US-government body directly and indirectly responsible for many serious crimes, including murder, did George Bush once head?
3. Who was said to have been the only man to enter the British House of Parliament with honourable intentions?
4. Name the Birmingham 6.
5. Which failed Six-County politician will carry the 'Blueshirt' banner in the forthcoming Presidential election in the 26 Counties?

Prizes of a year's subscription to *An Glór Gafa* plus a £5 book token will be given to the first three correct entries opened on our closing date of December 22nd, 1990. The names of the winners will be published in *An Phoblacht/Republican News* and in our next issue.



## Answers to Summer '90 Quiz:

1. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.
  2. Judith Ward.
  3. Berlin.
  4. Cumann na mBán.
  5. The Battle of the Boyne.
- The winning entries were submitted by:  
Trish Foley, Milltown Malbay; M. Gallagher, Adershot, England; and Gary Lawlor, Dublin.



# BURGERS, BOOTS & BALDERDASH!

Study carefully the above photographs of Eoghan Mac Cormaic. Spot the difference?

**R**ight? Well, the boulder Eoghan was released on summer parole, the first time he had been outside these walls for 13 years. He was driven to Derry and, as he was alighting from the car to set foot once more on his native patch, he was hailed by an approaching youth dressed like a punk and clearly suffering from some form of intoxication:

"Hey! Hey boy!"

Eoghan looked around and soon realised the shouts were aimed at him.

"Here," said the punk, "you wouldn't have a cigarette for us, would you?"

Eoghan reached into his pocket, drew out a pack of 20 and handed them to the bleary youth.

"Here, help yourself," he said.

The young fella took a handful, leaned forward and said:

"Thanks mate, yours skin-heads are the only ones who care about people in this town."

food. Like children, we have to eat what is put in front of us, or do without. Conversation often turns to the desire for sirloin steak, French fried onions and all the trimmings. Only last Friday, I saw a group of lads drooling over a Chinese takeaway menu advertised in the *Andersonstown News*. The pain of caged gourmets.

So, when I heard a group of screws talking about food, I adjusted my antennae and tuned in (file this one under 'Hard To Believe, But True'):

1st Screw: "I'm not like the rest of yous, you know. I don't waste my money on drink and gambling and fast cars."

Other Screws (puzzled and intrigued): "Is that right?"

1st Screw: "Naw, I like the good things in life — a nice house, a decent car, a couple of holidays a year, the odd night out and the best of food. I really like my grub."

Other Screws: "Is that right?"

1st Screw: "Aye, Sure just the other night me and the wife got into the car and drove the whole way to Dublin to this

restaurant we'd heard about. You should have seen it. The place was lovely. Spotless, the best of service, the food was magnificent, there was plenty of it and it wasn't expensive. It was brilliant. You should try it sometime."

Other Screws (licking their lips): "What's the name of it?"

1st Screw: "McDonalds."

**O**ccasionally, we receive visitors to the wings. In the main they are knowledgeable and willing to discuss gaol and political issues.

Then there was John Alderdice, leader of the Alliance Party, whose visit forever earned him the title John

Balderdash. Or Peter Bottomley, who visited H4 before he was sacked as an NIO junior minister with responsibility for roads and farms. The lads in H4 were told that an NIO minister was on his way so, with a flurry, they got ready to present the arguments on segregation in the Crum, the Life Review Board and all the other pressing gaol issues.

In breezed Peter, looking for all the world like an overgrown public schoolboy, surrounded by RUC minders and NIO officials — a veritable flood of suits. Ready to launch into debate, the lads were left dumb and open-mouthed when he said:

"Hello, I'm Peter Bottomley. I have reduced road deaths by 40% and I'm here to ask your opinion on how I can persuade young people not to drink and drive."

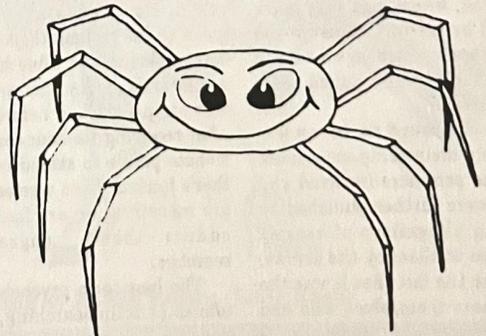
**F**ormer British Secretary of State Jim Prior's time in charge is honoured in the H-Blocks by having the gaol-issue, 'civilian-type' shoes named after him. A pair of Jim Priors are brown, lace-up shoes, so plain they have never been in fashion. Like Ciaran McGillicuddy's coat, they are of a time when shoes were just shoes.

When a newly-sentenced man had his shoes taken by the screws at reception, he was told:

"You can wear a pair of Jim Priors until you get a pair left in."

To which he made the immortal reply:

"Jim Prior's? Right, what cell's he in?" ■



By The Red Spider ■

**O**ne ever-present restriction in gaol is the lack of choice and quality of



## Strip-searching

Strip-searching was introduced in Armagh women's prison in November 1982, following an incident involving two Young Offenders who had picked up keys from an adjoining courtroom and taken them back to the gaol with them. The people involved in the incident were well-known for their childish pranks, but the NIO saw an excuse to humiliate and degrade women prisoners by implementing a policy of strip-searching.

In the initial stages, Republican remand prisoners suffered most because they were forced to endure this practice twice weekly whilst going to and coming from the remand courts. This journey only took about 20 minutes and at no time during it were the women ever out of the sight of the screws. At different times prisoners put up a passive protest by refusing to remove their clothing, whereupon they were seized by ten to 12 screws who held them spreadeagled on the floor and literally pulled their clothes off.

This proved to be an extremely distressing experience for the prisoners involved and they were further punished by having allegations of assault levelled at them by the screws. Despite the fact that it was the prisoners themselves who had the bruises and scratches on their bodies, the charges were

upheld and they lost long periods of remission and other privileges.

No-one, no matter what their age, state of health or mind, or alleged offence, was spared these searches. One night, a pregnant woman began to pass blood and before being allowed out to hospital she was strip-searched. Despite still haemorrhaging heavily on her return, she was strip-searched again. No consideration was given to the trauma the woman was suffering just after having a miscarriage. Another woman was strip-searched before and after receiving six-hour compassionate parole to attend her father's funeral. Even women who are menstruating are forced to endure these degrading searches.

The long-term psychological effects of strip-searching have been well-documented. Strip-searching continues today in

the high-security prison of Maghaberry and, although it is now random, it tends to affect long-term Republican prisoners more than those in for shorter periods. Women who are going to visit partners, sons or brothers in other gaols are strip-searched, and two women recently married were strip-searched before their weddings.

Nothing significant has ever been discovered as a result of this procedure and it holds no security value whatsoever. It is

simply a means to try to break the will of female prisoners and to dehumanise and degrade them into submission. ■

Nancy McCullough  
(Maghaberry)



# DANGEROUS DIVERSIONS

*"That's the video on!"* — the most famous and widely used war-cry in the H-Blocks since *"Tiocfaidh ár lá"* — resounds around the wings and echoes into the darkest recesses of the cells, bringing POWs scurrying and hurrying towards the canteen and their favourite seats.

Such is the power of the 'one-eyed monster', a power which was recognised by the 'Think Tank'(!) of the gaol administration a few years ago when they, in their paternal benevolence, introduced the video machine to the H-Blocks. There wasn't much to do in those days — no handicrafts, football once a month, no training facilities. An environment, in fact, fairly well suited to the furtherance of one's education and personal development.

Well, that's okay with the 'authorities', so long as education means adding and subtracting or full tops and commas, but when bunches of POWs were 'observed' sitting around tables discussing 'Legitimacy of Armed Struggle' and 'James Connolly Selected Writings' it became a different matter. The Mandarins of the Maze (mandarin oranges?) came to the conclusion that something extreme, something final, would have to be done to break this latest Republican conspiracy, i.e. real education, and, through it, the Republican struggle. So they bought eight video machines, fiendish weapons in a psychological war for the hearts and minds of the political prisoners.

The video machines worked, but the plan fell flat on its face. You see, no matter how much education you do, there's always time for a bit of relaxation and escapism (no pun intended) — in fact it's a necessity. How better to relax than to watch a good film and you with a cup of Coca-Cola in one hand and a Mars bar in the other? Not only that, but now we can see the shows we used to miss because of the lock-ups. The documentaries, the concerts and the sports programmes which were lost to us in the past are now reproduced for our enjoyment the following day.

Overall, the political documentaries are very popular and educational, especially those concerned in some way with the war in Ireland, and each programme is assessed by our resident experts (Berts) in relation to the political stance of the producer/presenter and the objectivity of the content. Following these in the popularity stakes come the 'quality' films, with viewing attendance directly proportional to the quality level (sometimes). Some of our more cynical critics might think again if they could see the glint of tears in POW's eyes during 'E.T.' (the movie) or after Packie Bonnar's penalty save. Soccer, of course, is another good crowd-puller along with the Gaelic sports, but it might depend on whether the game is live or recorded — or just plain boring.

Not all of our viewing is done via the video, though. The programme which probably has the largest following in every wing is (no, not Neighbours) the tea-time news, with men watching out for the subtle innuendo and the blatant propagandising which is part and parcel of the impartial reporting in this great

wee democracy (with a very small 'd'). During the day too, men will usually 'strap on' if there is something on which merits their attention.

As it stands today, the videos are considered by the POWs to be a plus and through time the 'authorities' have come to recognise the failure of their little scheme — inevitable, really, when dealing with POWs — and have actually come around to our way of thinking. They now supply us with educational videos! Documentaries on everything from Suez to Soweto, from Kuwait to the Ku Klux Klan, are shown on our screens every morning during the school term. It would seem that once again the might of the British Empire has been forced to surrender to the forces of progress... or has it?

We must always be on our guard against complacency in the face of such a crafty and conniving enemy. Which brings me to my next subject — something which could turn out to be even more distracting, even more sinister, than the video machine — the new electric toasters! ■

Terry Boyle  
(Long Kesh)

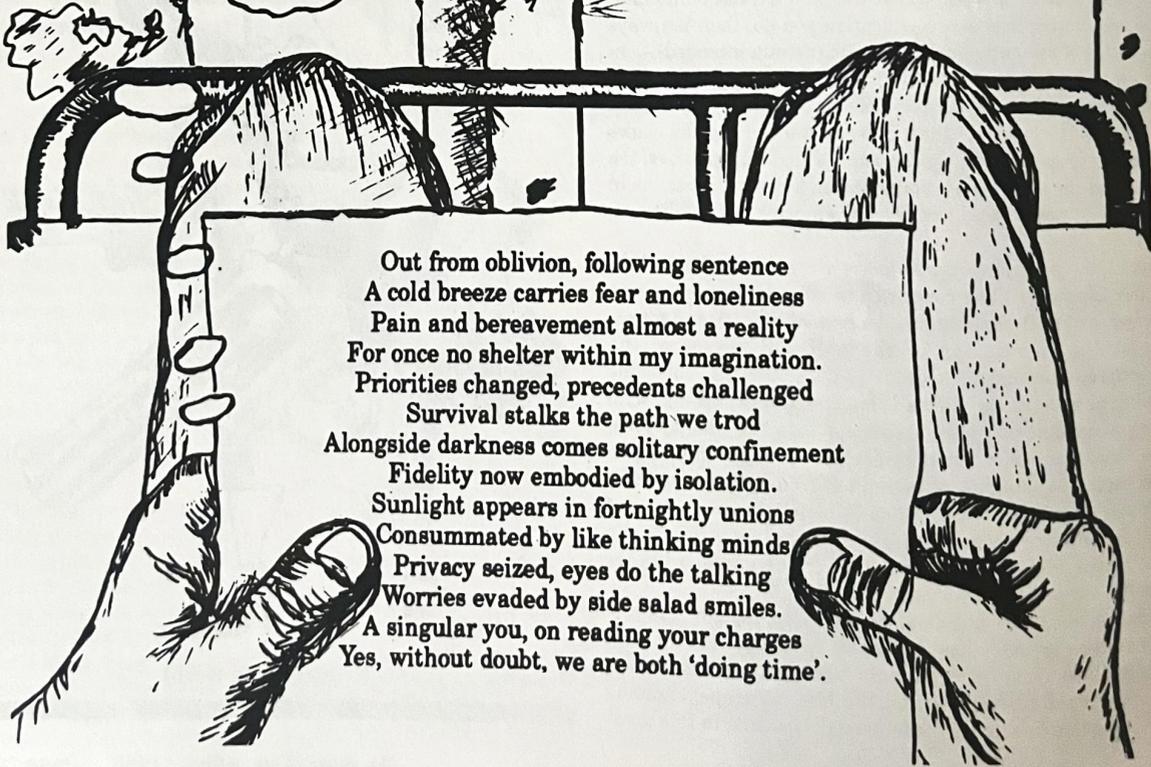


Drawing by Bobby Brown (Long Kesh)



# Without these walls

By Pat Arthurs (Portlaoise)  
Illustration by Tony Kelly (Portlaoise)



Out from oblivion, following sentence  
A cold breeze carries fear and loneliness  
Pain and bereavement almost a reality  
For once no shelter within my imagination.  
Priorities changed, precedents challenged  
Survival stalks the path we trod  
Alongside darkness comes solitary confinement  
Fidelity now embodied by isolation.  
Sunlight appears in fortnightly unions  
Consummated by like thinking minds  
Privacy seized, eyes do the talking  
Worries evaded by side salad smiles.  
A singular you, on reading your charges  
Yes, without doubt, we are both 'doing time'.

*...last night another soldier...*  
 by Aly Renwick. A Barbed Wire Book published by Information on Ireland. £3.95.

Of all the regiments in the British army, the Scottish are by far and without doubt the most infamous, bigoted and racist. In Ireland, they have the distinction of having been involved, both in and out of uniform, in more acts of thuggery, theft, arson, sexual assault and murder than any other regiment in the so-called British security forces.

Aly Renwick is an ex-Scottish soldier (pre-1969) but he is as divorced from the above sociopathic tendencies as day is from night. Rather, he is honest and sincere, a man of integrity. His involvement in Irish affairs speaks volumes for his concern about Ireland's British problem. Being an organiser in the earliest days of the Irish



Civil Rights Solidarity Campaign, the Anti-Internment League, a founder member of the noble Troops Out Movement and Information on Ireland, Renwick is a member of that small but courageous band of British writers, broadcasters and (few) journalists whose honest integrity and knowledge of Irish affairs entitles them to speak authoritatively about

their country's involvement in Ireland.

That is exactly what Renwick has done. And the result? A truly marvellous story.

*...last night another soldier...* relates the lives of two young people from similar working-class backgrounds. Billy, the youth from Glasgow, is an avid Rangers fan who, because of unemployment, joins the British army and becomes part of its brutality. Sorcha, a young woman from Belfast, experiences at first hand the brutalities inflicted on her family and friends within her community and joins with them in attempting to right the wrongs done in the name of 'peacekeeping'.

From a brief meeting of the two, during a riot between Rangers and Celtic fans at Ibrox Park, until a tragic, yet inevitable, ending in Kashmir Road in Belfast's Clonard area, the story follows their lives and experiences.

Although the two main characters are fictitious, most of the situations in the book are factual. In fact, the most notable and infamous political events of the late '60s, '70s and early '80s are included. The author is to be praised for his useful blend of fact and just the right amount of fiction. The book is a welcome change from the *Sun/Star* type of tabloid novels on our British problem.

If there is a criticism, it is only that the book is too short. Then again, if I'm to be honest, that may well stem from the speed at which I found myself reading it. I raced from page to page to find out what would happen next — all the time attempting to identify certain comrades and events! Still, it is only 200 pages, even if they do hold the reader from start to finish.

It is the author's own experience in the British army and his involvement in Irish affairs that

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 The Secretary  
 c/o 44 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.**

**GREEN CROSS  
 The Secretary  
 51/55 Falls Road, Belfast.**



● (above) Ally Renwick (left) one of the illustrations from the book *...1st night another soldier...*

allows this book to stand out from the usual garbage novels set in the Six Counties. It is this experience which allows the public a brief insight into

the real role of the 'ordinary squaddie'. For this too, the author must be congratulated. He has written a simple, straightforward account, well told and

well documented — a book which clearly exposes their crudities, their racism, their bigotry, but mostly their ignorance. Ignorance in that their policies are rooted in a tenacious fear of the Irish revolutionary and the radical changes that may come about when they are forced to withdraw from Ireland.

The book is dedicated to soldiers who faced the firing squad in Cromwell's army rather than come to Ireland to butcher our people. Most noble men indeed. I imagine that ex-British soldiers like Aly Renwick, while not having to pay as high a price for their roles in the Troops Out Movement etc., still suffer at the hands of their ignorant country people for their sincerity and work in speaking out and urging withdrawal from Ireland. People like Renwick know that pur-

suance of Britain's policies in Ireland may well end up destroying 'freedom' in their own country.

The book's conclusion is in itself a message for those British politicians who should be made to read it: that they should learn to accept radical change and face up to having to deal with the Republican Movement. It is the only way they will be able to obtain peace and security in not only Ireland but in their own country as well.

One final point. Neil McKinnon, the disgruntled yet aware character briefly seen in the book, may, I think, be an autobiographical shadow of the author. If so, he has nothing to apologise for. ■

Terence Clarke  
(Long Kesh)

**Midnight by Dean R. Koontz. Published by Headline Books. £4.50.**

Dean R. Koontz is a writer from Southern California whose 12 bestselling novels have reportedly sold 45 million copies. His is the type of pulp fiction seen in every bookshop, airport and railway station in the world.

His latest is called *Midnight*, a heap of nonsense

with the sort of plot which one day may reappear as a fifth-rate horror video. However, one scene does catch the eye. In it a journalist remembers covering a funeral in the Six Counties when "the mourners had metamorphosed into a pack of savages".

She remembers how they "had streamed from the churchyard into nearby streets, looking for those of a different faith, and soon they'd come across two British plain-clothes army officers patrolling the

area in an unmarked car". The "savage mob" drag the "would-be peacekeepers" from the car and beat them to death:

"Howling and shrieking, cursing, chanting slogans that degenerated into meaningless chains of sounds, mindless rhythms, like a flock of carrion-eating birds, they plucked at the shattered bodies, though they weren't like earthly birds, neither buzzards nor vultures, but like demons that had flown up from

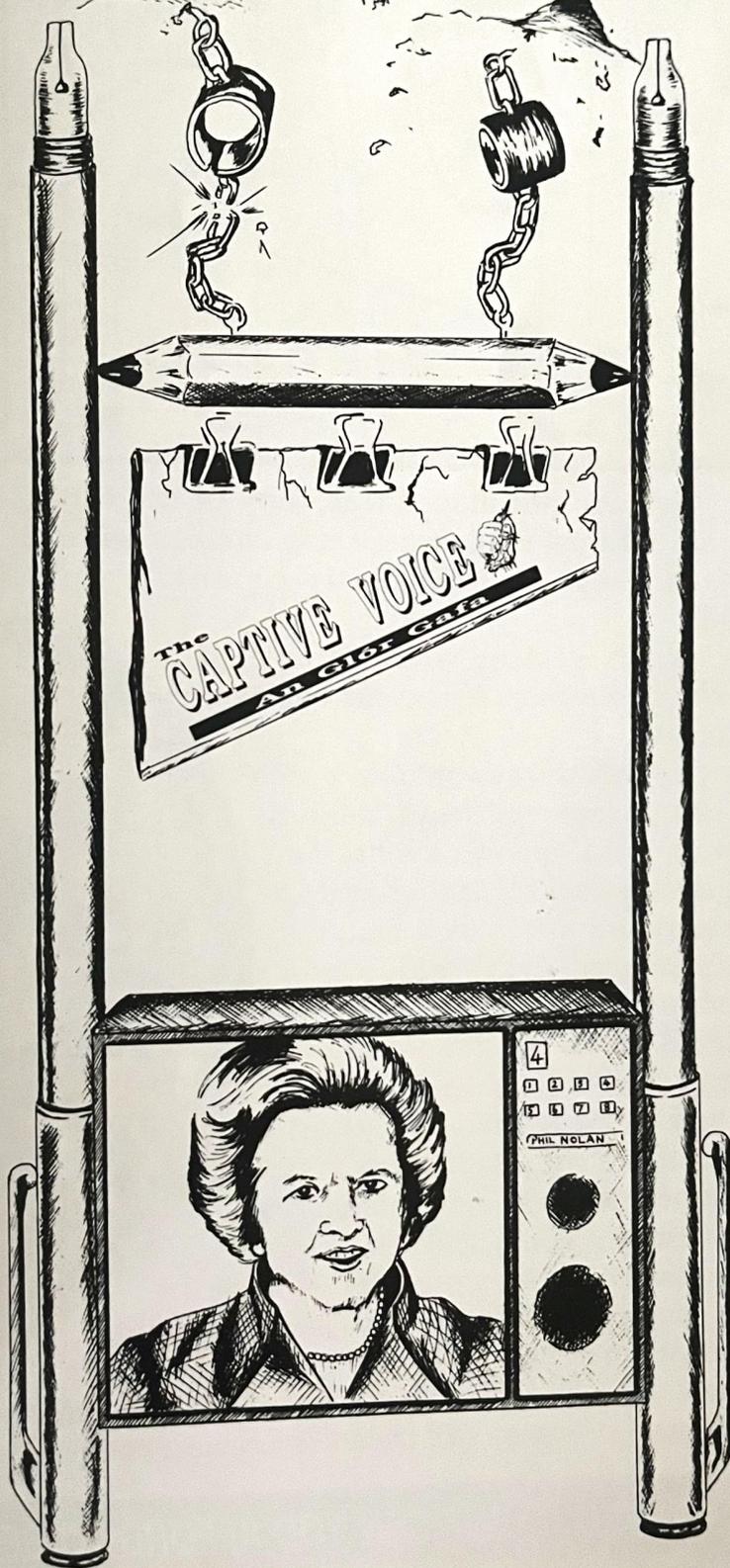
the pit, tearing at the dead men not only with the intention of consuming their flesh but with the hot desire to rip out and steal their souls."

And so it goes on...

The deaths of two British soldiers in West Belfast are distorted and transformed into a dramatic aside in a trashy novel. Fiction plays its part as propaganda and truth is lost to lies. ■

Brian Campbell  
(Long Kesh)

# Fight Censorship



Drawing by Geordie Hagans and Phil Nolan (Long Kesh)

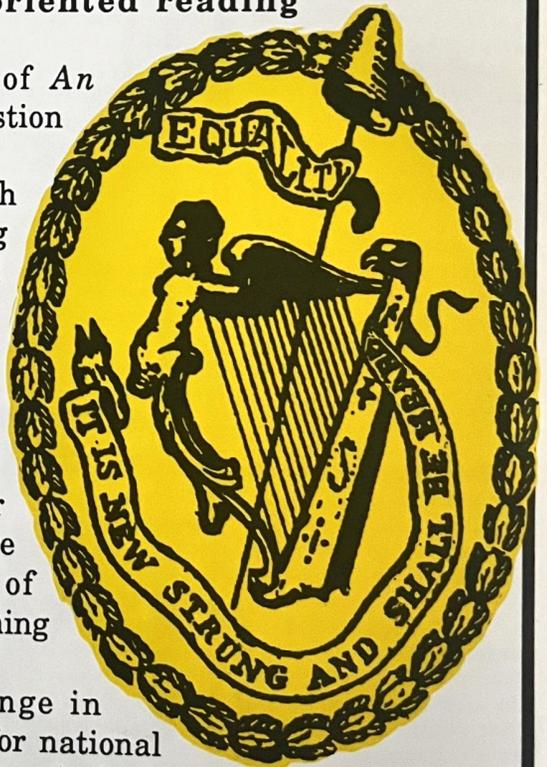
# AP/RN

Now that you have purchased this copy of the *Captive Voice/An Glór Gafa*, you will perhaps accept our compliments on your obviously excellent taste in politically oriented reading material.

So if you aren't getting your copy of *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, our question is why not?

AP/RN is the weekly newspaper which offers the uncensored news, dealing effectively with current events and issues, many of which are ignored by the mainstream media as a result of state-sponsored censorship, self-censorship or just plain right-wing bias. AP/RN is to the fore in covering the war in the Six Counties and further afield, carries many interesting feature articles, offers an alternative view of world events and gives details of upcoming events of interest to Republicans.

AP/RN unequivocally argues for change in Ireland, endorsing fully the struggle for national self-determination and peace with justice. And after all the serious news and views, the wit and wisdom of the Flying Column lurks on the back page, alongside Cormac, still Ireland's foremost political cartoonist.



**"YOU CAN AFFORD IT, BUT CAN YOU AFFORD TO BE WITHOUT IT?"**