

OCRASCÁIL HUNGER-STRIKE

NEWSHEET



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Committee

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VICTORY

In their greatest response to the candidature of political prisoners for decades, the people of the 26 Counties have elected Paddy Agnew as their T.D. for Louth, and Kieran Doherty for Cavan/Monaghan.

The total of 50,000 votes cast in the 9 constituencies where prisoners went forward displays magnificently the massive support which the prisoners have for their 5 demands.

Fianna Fail and others have paid the price of this lack of serious movement in support of the hunger strikers.

The 2 seats taken by Paddy Agnew and Kieran Doherty would have gone to Fianna Fail in normal circumstances. Charles Haughey's bargaining position with reference to independents for the formation of a Government has been seriously damaged.

The electorate have told the establishment in the south and whichever government which may be set up on June 30th that the hunger strike and the related five demands ARE an issue, that their traditional support for any party is conditional on a principled adoption of a strong anti-British policy.

The established parties are now confronted by a serious crisis because of their failure to act to save the lives of the 4 dead hunger strikers and because of their abject failure to move to save the lives of the new wave of men on the ultimate passive protest.

Neil Blaney and other independents will make support for any party on June 30th dependent on firm movement against Britain in support of the hunger strikers.

Rally now to the side of the political prisoner T.D.s.
Act now to save lives. Join the NHBAC campaign.

NATIONAL MARCH JUNE 28

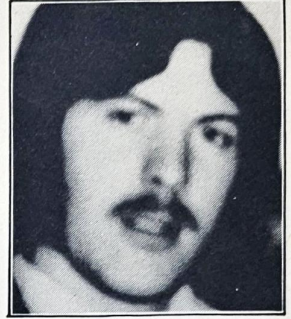
A National Rally will be held in Belfast on June 28th. This will be the first National mobilisation following the southern election. We should use the opportunity to reinforce the solidarity shown by the people of the 26 Counties in the election by a huge presence on the streets of Belfast.

Every area of the south is asked to have a large contingent, particularly the constituencies where we had prisoner candidates. Our contingents should be at least as strong as the numbers who have so many times come south for marches in the past.

- (1) Book your buses now.
- (2) Poster/leaflets are being produced.
- (3) Those people who require accommodation overnight in Belfast MUST NOT wait until they are there to arrange this. Areas are responsible for arranging accommodation in a collective way.
- (4) Please ensure that if you intend to travel home on the day of the march, that you don't miss your transportation.



PADDY
AGNEW, TD



K. DOHERTY,
TD

Escalation of Hunger Strike

The H-Block prisoners have decided to escalate the hunger strike. On June 8th, Tom McElwee began to fast and he was joined by Paddy Quinn on June 15th. The men believe that it is necessary to prevent a situation where the British govt can have a 'breathing space' between waves of hunger strikers. To keep up continuous pressure, there will be more prisoners joining the hunger strike until the time gap created by the deaths of the first 4 prisoners is closed.

Thanks to Electorate

The 50,296 voters who polled for the 9 political prisoner candidates and especially those in Louth and Cavan/Monaghan have helped to save lives.

They have made history and they must be congratulated.

The NHBAC salutes all those who assisted in the election success and the victory of Paddy Agnew and Kieran Doherty.

FUNDS STILL URGENTLY NEEDED

Send to H-Block Armagh Committee
30 Mountjoy Square, Dublin 1.

Joe McDonnell

JOE McDONNELL was born on September 14th 1950. He is from west Belfast, and is married with two children. He is currently one of the four H-Block hunger-strikers, having replaced the late Bobby Sands on Saturday 9th May.

He was interned for a few months in 1972, first on the prison ship Maidstone and then in Long Kesh. He was again interned in 1973 and released in 1974.

In October 1976 he was arrested, along with Bobby Sands and two others, following an IRA commercial bombing attack on the outskirts of Belfast. In a gun battle between the IRA and the RUC at the scene, two other Volunteers were wounded.

Joe and those arrested with him were interrogated in Castle-reagh for six days during which time they were roughly treated. All were charged with possession of one firearm, which was recov-



ered from the car in which they were travelling, and they received fourteen-year sentences of imprisonment.

In the H-Blocks, Joe went on the blanket and forfeited his monthly visits rather than wear prison uniform. Until he went on the hunger-strike, his wife, Goretti, had not seen him since September 1977.

Kieran Doherty

KIERAN DOHERTY was born on October 16 1955, and is one of a family of six children who come from the Andersonstown district of west Belfast. He is currently one of the four H-Block hunger-strikers, having replaced the late Raymond McCreesh on Friday 22nd May.

Kieran joined the Republican Movement in late 1971, after the introduction of internment in August of that year. He was arrested in February 1973 and interned in Long Kesh without charge or trial, for almost three years, before being released in November 1975.

In August 1976 he was arrested in south Belfast, some time after a car chase on the Malone Road involving the RUC and two cars commandeered by the IRA. He was charged with possession of firearms and explosives, and with commandeering a car.



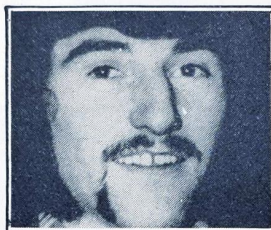
After spending seventeen months on remand, Kieran was sentenced in January 1978 to twenty-two years' imprisonment, and immediately joined the H-Block blanket protest.

Kevin Lynch

KEVIN LYNCH was born on May 25th 1956 in Park village, eight miles west of Dungiven, in County Derry, where his parents now live. He has four elder brothers and three sisters. He is currently one of the four H-Block hunger-strikers, having replaced the late Patsy O'Hara, a fellow INLA member, on Saturday 23rd May.

Kevin has been an active republican since the age of fourteen. He once captained a County Derry under-sixteen hurling team which won an all-Ireland final. At the age of sixteen he began work as a bricklayer, working in England for three years.

Kevin was arrested out of his Dungiven home in December 1976, and was interrogated in Castle-reagh barracks for three



days. He was charged with taking part in an armed raid, with carrying out a punishment shooting, and with conspiring to disarm members of the British forces.

After being held on remand for one year in Belfast's Crumlin Road jail, he was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment in December 1977. Inside the H-Blocks he went on the blanket immediately, and has since been attacked several times by warders.

Tom McElwee

THOMAS McELWEE is a twenty-three-year-old South Derry man, from Bellaghy, who began to refuse food last Monday, 8th June.

Thomas is the sixth in a family of eight girls and four boys, one of whom — twenty-one-year-old Benedict — is also on the blanket, having been captured on the same IRA operation as Thomas, in October 1976. An earlier hunger-striker, the late Francis Hughes, was a first cousin of Thomas and their respective family homes are less than a half-a-mile apart on the Scribe Road in Bellaghy.

After leaving school at the age of seventeen, Thomas worked for a while as an apprentice motor mechanic.

He was part of a seven-man IRA active service unit, all of whom were arrested after a premature bomb explosion in a car four of them were in, in the Markethill area of Ballymena on October 9th 1976. Thomas lost an eye in the explosion, his comrade Sean McPeake lost a leg, and Colm Scullion lost several toes. Also on the operation were



Thomas' brother, Benedict, and Thomas' girlfriend, Dolores O'Neill.

Thomas spent eleven months on remand and after a trial lasting three weeks, in October 1977, was sentenced to life imprisonment plus twenty years. He is on the blanket in H5-Block.

Benedict is serving a ten-year sentence in H4-Block and Thomas' girlfriend, Dolores O'Neill, is serving a life sentence in Armagh jail, on the protest.

Thomas McElwee joined Joe McDonnell, Kieran Doherty, Kevin Lynch and Martin Hurson on the hunger-strike, and this weekend completes his first week without food.

Martin Hurson

MARTIN HURSON was born on September 13th 1954 in Cappagh, County Tyrone. He is the second youngest in the family and has two brothers and six sisters. His mother is dead.

He is currently one of the four H-Block hunger-strikers, having replaced the late Francis Hughes on Friday 29th May.

Martin Hurson was arrested in a dawn raid on his home by the British army in November 1976. He was interrogated in both Omagh and Cookstown RUC barracks, and signed self-incriminating statements as a result of beatings by the same RUC men who are presently suspended for assaulting James Joseph Rafferty, also from Cappagh.

At his trial in October 1977 Martin contested the admissibility of the statements which were the only evidence against him.

Martin was convicted of various republican offences, the judge



declaring that the statement taken in Omagh was admissible, and so he, the judge did not have to consider the Cookstown statement. And so, in November 1977, Martin went on the blanket protest in the H-Blocks but appealed against his conviction.

At Martin's re-trial in September 1979, the judge ruled the Omagh statement inadmissible, but then went on to accept the Cookstown statement and convicted Martin again to twenty years. Martin again appealed this conviction but it was disallowed in June 1980.

Paddy Quinn

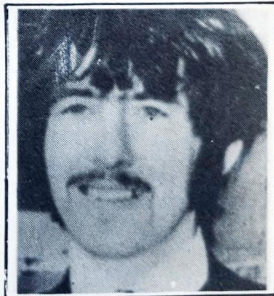
PADDY QUINN the latest man to join the hunger strike is from Armagh.

Paddy was born on the 9th October 1951. He is the eldest of eight children, 4 girls and 3 other boys. The Quinn family live in Beleeks, Co. Armagh.

Paddy started his education at the local primary school, he attended St. Josephs Secondary school in Newry for one year and finished his "O" levels at St. Colmans College in Newry.

From the time he left school until his capture on June 25th 1976 in the same operation as Ray McCreesh and Dan McGuinness, Paddy worked as a draughtsman with a Newry firm of engineering consultants.

He was remanded for 9 months on serious charges. On 24th March 1977 he was sentenced to a total of 14 years for conspiracy to kill British troops, possession of firearms with intent to



kill and attempted murder, and membership of the IRA.

Paddy, on his entry into H-4 immediately joined the blanket protest. Shortly after his arrival at Long Kesh he was badly scalded when along with 11 others he was immersed in boiling hot baths laced with detergent by sectarian warders.

Paddy joined the first hunger strike last December for the last four days.