

PAC

Bulletin

June 1974

The Prisoners

Noel Jenkinson	30 years	Leicester
Joe Farrington	4 years	Stafford
Michael Duignan	3½ years	Norwich
James Moore	7 years	Wormwood Scrubs
Mathew Ward	5 years	Perth
James Sweeney	7 years	Peterhead
Caroline Reneghan	5 years	Gateshead
Marian Price	life/20 years	Brixton
Dolours Price	life/ 20 years	Brixton
William McLarnon	15 years	Wormwood Scrubs
Roy Walsh	life/ 20 years	Wakefield
Gerry Kelly	life/20 years	Wormwood Scrubs
Martin Brady	life/20 years	Hull
William Armstrong	life/20 years	South Littleton
Hugh Feeney	life/20 years	Gartree
Paul Holmes	life/20 years	Parkhurst
Fr Fell	12 years	Wakefield
Anthony Lynch	10 years	Winson Green
Francis Stagg	10 years	Parkhurst
Thomas Rush	7 years	Winson Green
Sean Colley	4 years	Manchester
John McCabe	3 years	Liverpool
Michael Kneafsey	4 years	Liverpool
Philip Sheridan	10 years	Gartree
Gerry Mealey	10 years	Wormwood Scrubs
John Campbell	10 years	Wakefield
Patrick Dowling	4 years	Winson Green
Bob Gallagher	6 years	Liverpool
Michael Egan	4 years	Leeds

1. Michael Gaughan, who was due for release in January 1976, was murdered in Parkhurst prison on 3rd June. He had been on hunger strike since the end of March and had lost only 1½ stone in weight, the cause of death is still not known but it was obviously as a result of the treatment given to him, and also to Francis Stagg who narrowly escaped death, by prison authorities in both Parkhurst and Albany. It is clear that the Labour government was prepared to see both Gaughan and Stagg die. Unless we can give widespread and consistent support and publicity to all Irish political prisoners now suffering in British prisons while they are still alive, then they will continue to be the victims of bad treatment and torture by the British. We must support a campaign for an amnesty for all Irish political prisoners.

2. Gerry Kelly, Hugh Feeney, and Dolours and Marian Price decided, after consulting with each other, to end their hunger strike on Friday 7th June. They have been given an assurance by the Home Office that they will be back in Ireland by the end of the year. During the hunger strike, and especially when force feeding had to be ended because of the weakened condition of the prisoners, the Home Office and the British papers engaged in a most disgusting and vile campaign of lies and distortions about the prisoners and their relatives and those who were helping them. Eventually, the Joint Action Committee decided to give no more news to the capitalist British press. Since December 1973, the fares of the families have been paid every time they have come from Belfast, they have not had to take one penny from the government that was torturing their children. The money was raised by the Joint Action Committee by collections amongst the Irish community in England, especially London. Francis Stagg was ordered off his hunger strike to save his life. It is hoped he will now be moved out of Parkhurst which has a terrible reputation to a prison on the main land. The PAC intends to campaign for all Irish political prisoners to be allowed to serve their sentences in one prison with the same "special category" treatment which is given to political prisoners in both the Six Counties and the Free State.

3. Michael Duignan sentenced to 3½ years at Winchester in November 1972 at the same trial in which Noel Jenkinson was given 30 years, will be released on 28 June. Joe Farrington sentenced to 4 years for possession the day after the Aldershot explosion will be released on 2 August. While he was in prison Joe's father became seriously ill with cancer and died. Joe was refused parole to visit him and was also refused parole to attend the funeral. On 26 May Birmingham Clann na h-Eireann organised a picket on Stafford prison in protest against the inhuman treatment of this young boy. We hope everyone will make an effort to contribute to the release fund to help these two prisoners on their release.

4. Martin Brady has sent out a letter from Hull describing the treatment he is getting there. The letter was smuggled out and posted to the PAC as the prison censors refuse to allow him to describe the way he is being treated. The following are extracts from Martin's letter:

"I went on hunger strike (in protest at victimization) and was on it for near three weeks. But I had to come off it as I was mentally and physically tortured. After the eleventh day I was put into the hospital where I was force fed. When I first arrived in the hospital all my clothes were taken off me and I was given a pair of smelly plastic pajamas. I was then put into a strip cell which had nothing in it except a rubber mattress and this also had an unpleasant smell and when I tried to sleep on it I found it to be damp and I was kept in this cell for four days. While I was in the strip cell I was not allowed to drink water. They would only offer me milk and this I refused to drink as I was on hunger strike. The doctor stopped my smoking and also stopped me reading and exercising. I was allowed to write letters but they were stopped because I was not allowed to tell my wife how I was being treated. After four days I was to^{LD} I was being force fed and it took four screws and the doctor to force feed me. I was manhandled into a chain and held down. One screw was trying to force my mouth open by pressing a piece of wood against my lips.

After a time I found this painful and I had to open my lips and he started to push the piece of wood against my teeth as I had them closed. But I again found this painful and had to open my mouth wide. The screw kept this piece of wood in my mouth because it had a hole in the middle of it and this helped the doctor to push the feeding tube down my stomach. As the doctor put the tube into my mouth and through the hole I tried to push the tube out again by using my tongue and this made the doctor say a few words to me. Slowly he got his own way and he started to push the tube down and he would push and tell me to swallow. But what he would do is pull a bit of the tube back up again and this made my stomach turn. Although I had nothing in my stomach for near two weeks I went through all the motions of being sick. So this is what force feeding is all about and this experience with the doctor and screws happened on several occasions and because of the mental and physical pain I was going through I called the hunger and thirst strike off.

I am not allowed to the compound to exercise with the other in-mates. The others have the use of the compound for seven different exercise periods for 90 minutes at a time. I am only offered two exercise periods and because of the fact I am asked to take my exercise on my own and because I'm only allowed 30 minutes I refused to take this kind of exercise. So I get no exercise now."

Martin goes on to say that he is also refusing visits because he is only allowed to see his wife and child through a glass screen with screws on either side. His mail is also read by a number of prison officers before it is given to him often weeks later. The PAC intends to take up Martin's complaints with the Home Office and MPs. We believe that the same systematic victimisation is being applied to other Irish prisoners, especially those in Gartree. It is a clear indication that they have "special category" treatment already, but "specially bad".

5. Kenneth Lennon the informer who acted as an agent provocateur for the British Special branch in the Luton case and in the case of Patrick O'Brien (see item 10 in last bulletin) was found shot dead in Banstead on 11 April three days after being acquitted of a charge of plotting a prison escape. O'Brien was found guilty of the same charge and sentenced to 3 years. Lennon made a long statement to the NCCL admitting that he had worked for the Special Branch informing on Irish organisations and that in particular he had taken part in the so-called conspiracy to rob for which the "Luton Three" were given 10 years. On 5 June, Patrick O'Brien was freed on appeal by Widgery who however said that no criticism could be made of the prosecution in the case! On 10 June Widgery adjourned the appeal made by the Luton three, Sheridan, Campbell and Mealey and said that he could not decide that they had been "egged on" by Lennon until he heard from them - in spite of Lennon's own statement and although Widgery said that "It could be accepted without difficulty that Lennon was a police informer giving information about the activities of the Luton group". This prevarication is not good enough. The Luton prisoners should be released immediately. No-one can give them back the time they have already wasted in prison. This latest revelation of the Branches activities should also remind us of the urgency of taking the case of Noel Jenkinson, framed by police agent John Parker, to the Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. It is now 12 months since Noel was refused leave to appeal. The appeal fund now stands at £500. Another list will be published in the next Bulletin.

6. Bob Gallagher had his appeal against his 6 year sentence turned down by the Court of Appeal on 13 June.

7. Fr Fell was refused leave to appeal against his 12 year sentence on 20 June. Anthony Lynch, Francis Stagg and Thomas Rush were also refused leave to appeal. Fr Fell's QC who was also representing Stagg and Lynch withdrew from appearing for Fr Fell because his grounds for appeal for the other two was that Fr Fell should have been given a much heavier sentence than the others! Fr Fell is to appeal against conviction. Attempts have been made to prevent him from being visited by his solicitor.

8. Pat Arrowsmith was sentenced to 18 months at the Old Bailey on 20 May after being found guilty of incitement to disaffection - the same charge as Michael Tobin served two years for. The leaflet being handed to soldiers which was the basis of the prosecutions case had already been cleared by the Department of Public Prosecution after the Colchester trial at which Pat was found not guilty of causing a breach of the peace on 14 September. Pat is to appeal against conviction as obviously a very serious infringement of freedom of speech is involved in the implementation of the incitement to disaffection act which guarantees that soldiers are allowed access only to one side of the argument - i.e. the government's. Pat has been adopted as a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty who employ her. She is a well-known pacifist. While her case was starting at the old Bailey, a member of the British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland group, Gwyneth Williams, was charged with contempt of court for distributing a leaflet outside the court.

9. James Strutt, a member of the U.V.F. who had been sentenced to 8 years on arms charges in November 7 last year at Glasgow High court was moved to the Crumlin Road prison during May. Strutt escaped from the Crumlin Road in early 1973. No outcry was heard from the Tories about the "security risk" attached to this particular transfer. They were too busy making a noise about the Belfast prisoners who have not been moved yet. Funny isn't it?

10. U.D.A. case. Malcolm Nicol was sentenced to 10 years at Glasgow High Court on 6 June after pleading guilty to illegal possession of explosives and detonators. George Collingwood, Alexander Scott, and Samuel Tyrie were sentenced to 7 years when they were found guilty of being in possession of 7 sticks of explosives and 2 detonators. Colin Campbell was given six years after pleading guilty to theft of a car and taking part in an armed raid on a Glasgow sub-post office. When the trial opened the men were also charged with "Conspiring to further the purposes of the U.D.A. or some other unknown association" by obtaining firearms, ammunition, explosives and money.

This charge, like an exactly parallel relating to the I.R.A. in the Aldershot trial, was dropped by the prosecution when evidence about the defendants political opinions had been heard by the court. The heavy sentences passed against these U.D.A. men indicate that we can expect that the bias, prejudice and manipulation of judicial procedures which have become established practice in trials of Republicans will now be used against loyalists and that heavier vicious sentencing will result.

11. Judith Theresa Ward was committed for trial at Wakefield crown court on 24 June when she appeared Leeds. Her trial will start on 2 October. She is charged with 12 counts of murder in connection with the coach bomb blast and the prosecution announced that they would also be charging her in connection with the Defence College bomb in Buckingham in Feb. and with the Euston

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station bomb last September. The reason given for transferring the trial to Wakefield was that it was in the interests of security. It is expected that Theresa Ward's trial will be conducted in a way fully in keeping with what we have all come to expect from the justly renowned operations of British justice.

12. Three in one. Six Irishmen appeared in court at Uxbridge on June 25. They were accused in various combinations of causing explosions. Andrew Mulryan and Patrick Mulryan were held by police after a raid on a house in Maidenhead on the 10th May. They were charged with possession at Maidenhead court on 13th May. Cornelius McFadden and John Melia have been in custody since 10th April and were charged with conspiracy to cause explosions at Uxbridge Court on 11th April. Robert and Hugh Cunningham have also been in custody since April and something most sinister can be read into the latest manipulations of the police of bringing all six to trial together. A similar technique was used in the Aldershot trial. As we have come to expect at the trials of Irish political activists in Britain the prisoners are already found guilty by the British capitalist press. This, and the high security show put on by the police condemns the prisoners as dangerous criminals in the minds of any potential juror, and makes easy the task of class prejudiced and racialist British judges. No Irish person can get a fair trial in this country at the present time.

13. Ann and Eileen Gillespie were forcibly stopped from boarding the boat at Holyhead on Friday night 26th April. They were taken to Manchester and charged at the City Magistrates court on the 30th April with conspiracy to cause explosions. The British capitalist press, using the well tried technique of guilty by association, linked the girls to the most famous IRA man of all time who has been bombing England according to the press for a longer time than Hitler managed ie Patrick Guilfoyle. If the girls knew Patrick Guilfoyle then they must be guilty. They are held in Risley Remand Centre.

On the 6th May Edward Byrne from Newry was taken from his hospital bed, brought by ambulance to court and charged with conspiracy to cause explosions. He was too ill to be brought into the court. Armed plain clothed police surrounded the ambulance.

14. Christopher Downey. An inquest in Manchester on 29th March returned a verdict of murder by persons unknown on Christopher Downey who died after receiving gun shot wounds on October 21st 1973. Downey was shot in Belfast in 1971 and subsequently left to live in Manchester.

15. The British Right Arms. Roy Rogers Forbes and John William Griffiths were charged in Southampton on April 8th under section 4 of the Explosives Substances Act 1893. On April 11th John William Roy Gadd was similarly charged. Rifles, automatic weapons, ammunition and explosives were discovered on the container vessel Dart America which arrived from Halifax, Nova Scotia. In Toronto on April 8th police found large quantities of arms and ammunition. Forbes is an extreme right wing Tory councillor in Leeds. Griffiths' wife was a defeated Tory councillor candidate in the elections last year. The importation of arms by the Right Wing on a large scale is a serious threat to the very existence of the Working Class Movement. Remember Chile.

16. Henry Arthur Wilkes (see 18 April bulletin) who pleaded guilty to unlawful possession of explosives was sentenced to a years imprisonment suspended for one year at Liverpool Crown Court on 24th April. 'Justice' Kerr said he accepted Wilkes' statement that he would not have used the explosives himself. Wilkes is Deputy Grand Master Elect of England.

17. Trevor Aspinall a reporter on the Sunday People was charged on April 20 with offences under the Firearms Act. Also charged are Gerald Smiley and Alan Parker. The court heard that Aspinall's motives for being armed "were not contrary to the law, but in aid of the law". The Right had groups organised in aid of the law at Red Lion Square also though they were not called upon. Robert Kennedy was charged in the same court with possession.

18. Fredman Ashe Lincoln Q C was fined £20 in Bow Street on 30 th April for having a loaded Webley-Scott 7.65 mm pistol in his possession in the Strand. "I carry a gun for my own protection" he told the court. Remember Patrick Molloy (see IO bulletin March 1973 fined £50 for having a toy pistol who was told by a London magistrate "People will be able to sleep more easily in their beds when a gun is taken away from an Irishman").

19. Sean O'Conaill, Raymond Kane and Barry Reid were charged on the 9 th April at Hexham magistrates court with the murder of of Lt Col John Stevenson, British Army Commander of Otterburn Training camp who was shot on 8 th April. British press had immediately accused the IRA; thus implying that the three men were IRA members. Reid's defence said this press comment " gave rise to considerable prejudice because members of the jury could be chosen from members of the public who could be influenced by speculation of that nature". Armed police with dogs patrolled the court.

20. Timothy Noonan is due to be released on June 28 th. His plea to the Home Office to be allowed to return to Ireland after his serious heart operation was rejected. A member of staff at the Brompton Chest Hospital described the H O decision as 'inhuman'. Noonan is now serving the final days of his sentence given while in jail of 3 years. He has spent 3½ years in solitary confinement in Parkhurst. Even while recovering after his operation warders wearing white smocks guarded him in hospital.

21. Karl Marx. On Sunday 5 th May members of the Prisoners Aid Committee placed flowers on the grave of Karl Marx in Highgate Cemetary on the 156 th anniversary of his birth. The flowers were placed in recognition of Marx's work on behalf of Irish Fenian prisoners in English jails. The flowers carried the quotation of Marx that 'political prisoners are not treated anywhere as badly as in England'.

22. Manchester Martyrs Commemoration. On 14 th April the traditional march in memory of the three Fenians hanged in 1867 was attacked by a counter demo. The bishop of Salford Thomas Holland refused permission to the marchers to enter the graveyard and the gates were locked when they arrived outside. The march organisers accused the bishop of 'responsibility for attracting all the publicity which led to this deplorable fracas'. Police raids took place on Irish homes in the area that night.

23. Terrorist cases. Petty Officer Philip Tomlinson from the Royal Navy barracks at Chatham was charged with the murder of Arthur Edward Dodd at Chatham on 13 th April. Lance Corporal Brian Edward Shatford, Private John McCloy and Private Edward Goodright were charged on the 8 th April with assaulting Michael McCoy, and Michael McEneaney at Newry McCoy said he was visiting his friends house when the terrorists came in. They thumped and kicked both of them. They were taken to Crossmaglen RUC barracks where they were beaten again and McCoy was hooded and threatened with shooting. They were taken by helicopter to Bessbrook army camp where they were repeatedly beaten before being taken to Newry RUC barracks. On the way a revolver was pushed down McEneaney's throat and parts of his teeth brooken. A doctor confirmed the injuries the men had received to

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arms, legs, body and face. The terrorists were returned for trial at Belfast City Commission. Terrorist Alfred Todd was cleared by Judge Roy Watt at Belfast City Commission of assaulting Patrick Doherty in Derry on July 21 st last year. Doherty came to the assistance of a drunken person and had been struck with the terrorists rifle. He had eight stitches. The judge in exonerating the terrorist said he found it difficult to believe that the blow was deliberate and the defendant may have struck harder than he intended'. Two British Army "Intelligence" officers Warrant Officer Robin King and Sergeant Michael Harold Jarrett of First Bat. Devon & Dorset Reg. were cleared ^{on 8, 5, 74 at Dunmurray court} of assaulting a Long Kesh **internee** 18 year old Kieran Michael while interrogating him. Pvte. Anthony David Leach of the same regiment was cleared of assaulting a man whose house and garden he was searching on Jan 3rd. The man complained to Dunmurray court on 8th May that the soldier had struck him and called him an "Irish bastard". The magistrate said the soldier had only used what force was necessary to defend himself". Yet another soldier from the Devon & Dorset celebrated his return from Ireland by shooting his mother in the neck in March while on leave. An inquest in 24 May returned a verdict of accidental death. Possible charges under the Firearms Act may follow, as the gun in question was not legally held, but we don't hold out much hope.

24. Terrorist in chief, Francis Foxford, returned to England and released on bail after being given a vicious three year sentence for the murder of 12 year old Kevin Heatley in Newry last year, was freed by the Northern Ireland Court Appeal on Friday 21 June. "Justices" Lowry, Curran and Jones listened to the appeal for 8 days. (It only took a day to refuse Noel Jenkinson leave to appeal). Even after having 8 days to try to think of a reason for freeing the terrorist, it still took Lowry's half an hour contorted argument to justify what was after all a foregone conclusion. The "reason" given was the failure of the prosecution to submit the evidence of two soldiers. We wonder how the prosecution came to overlook their evidence?

25. Fr Michael Connolly was persecuted in the manner to which we have grown accustomed for the remarks he made at the funeral of Michael Gaughan. When the British gutter press had set up their howling the church obligingly stepped in and suspended him just as they turned away when the Home Office tried to prevent Fr Fell saying mass in prison. What the church likes is churchmen like Bishop Tickle who say all the things the British government wants to hear - this does not include the truth.

26. Men in dark glasses at Kilburn succeeded in upsetting British liberal opinion to an extent that one would not have thought possible considering the resounding silence which followed Bloody Sunday and the systematic murder and torture of Irishmen by the British Army. Somebody somewhere seems to have got their values a bit jumbled, or are sunglasses more of a threat to this fragile "democracy" than electric shocks, murder of children, indefinite imprisonment without trial and men who hide their identity behind curtains and so who do not need dark glasses?

27. Strasbourg Appeal for Noel Jenkinson. Please return immediately any raffle tickets which you are unable to sell. Return all stubbs and money to PAC by July 20th. The proceeds will go to pay £1,400 for trial transcript. Return all Noel Jenkinson pamphlet money immediately to enable us to close this account. Approximately 20 pamphlets remain unsold.

28 Please send clippings of all cases that involve soldiers or Irish prisoners.

28. Statement from Dolours and Marian Price, Gerry Kelly and Hugh Feeney dated 8 th June 1974.

We went on hunger strike 206 days ago in support of our demand for Political Prisoner status and transfer to prison in Northern Ireland. For 167 days of that period we were forcibly fed until some of the doctors refused to continue the practice.

On June 1 st, the Home Secretary, Mr Roy Jenkins, issued a statement about our position. He said that he believed that it would be 'possible and reasonable for us to serve the bulk of our long sentences in Northern Ireland'. In the days following the release of that statement clarification of its meaning was transmitted to us from the Home Office through Lord Brockway, Mr Albert Stallard M P and Assemblyman Paddy Devlin.

Having carefully considered all these developments over the past week, we have decided to terminate our hunger strike. This decision is an act of **trust** on our part, a trust which must be reciprocated. It was taken by us personally and not under pressure from our parents or anybody else. Our parents were not responsible for our original decision to go on hunger strike but they supported us in carrying it through; they are not responsible for our present decision but once again they support us. We cannot thank them sufficiently for their solidarity with us. We also wish to thank other individuals and groups for their support. In this connection we must give special mention to the Joint Action Committee in London who have helped us and our relatives so much over the past seven months.

A number of considerations impelled us to make our present decision. First of all we considered that we had an obligation to preserve our own lives when a reasonable response had been given to our demands. Ours was never a suicide mission since we did not set out to kill ourselves but only to secure just and indeed minimal demands. These demands had previously been granted to many other prisoners. We are also concerned least our deaths should bring further suffering to the people of Ireland. Our purpose has never been to cause suffering to others. We deeply regret the death of Michael Gaughan and offer our most sincere sympathy to his family and friends. May the sacrifices and sufferings of all our Irish people in prisons, internment camps and in their homes bring freedom, peace and justice to the country we love.

We have printed the statement in full as, for some reason, the papers which had been so interested in gossip and lies about the hunger strikers were not at all interested to publish their reasons for coming off.

29. The Joint Action Committee will remain active until . . . the hunger strikers have been returned to Ireland.

Footnote

There has been some delay in replying to mail over the last few weeks. We apologise for this and hope that we will be able to catch up very soon. As postage has gone up yet again, we would appreciate it if, when writing to us, you could include a stamp. Thank you.