

# REPUBLICAN news



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## MASON - IN - PANIC

In the early hours of Thursday morning twelve people, who had been held for the previous seven days in the notorious Castlereagh Interrogation Centre, were charged with conspiracy and I.R.A. membership.

This latest Masonic frame-up intended not only to smash Republican political opposition in Belfast but is intended to close down our Press Centre and to silence this newspaper. For both the Centre and the paper have been to the forefront nationally and internationally in exposing the horrifying reality of British rule in the Six Counties and especially over recent months of exposing the true facts of Britain's monument of shame: — the H-Blocks of Long Kesh.

Those charged on Thursday morning include seven leading members of Sinn Féin and several voluntary workers on "Republican News." They also include our Lurgan printer a prominent S.D.L.P. member.

Yet where is the voice of opposition of the S.D.L.P. to this blatant piece of police-state intimidation?

Also charged is Alan Friel, a photographer, from the left-wing Paris paper "Liberation". Perhaps this naked act of press censorship will spark international protests — at least

from his comrades of the European revolutionary left?

Indeed what response will there be from those countless liberals, socialists and so-called revolutionaries who have shed so many tears for victims of American imperialism in Vietnam and Chile?

There is at least one clear message from this latest Masonic move. The British remain in mortal fear of the strength of the Republican Movement and of the risen people.

We print below a statement, issued on Thursday by Belfast Comhairle

Ceannair:

"By charging the entire officer board of the Belfast Comhairle Ceannair Sinn Féin the British Government has virtually proscribed Sinn Féin in this city.

"This represents a serious attempt to silence the Republican voice of political dissent, disrupt Cumann activities and close down our complaints and advice centres — the base upon which we intend to build our people's assemblies. Also, several of the people charged

were to the forefront in publicising the H-Block protest, and in organising protests to highlight the legitimate demands of the political prisoners.

"Press officer Tom Hartley who worked in 170A Falls Road, is well known by national and foreign journalists, who'll see his detention as an act of political censorship.

"An open proscribing of Sinn Féin would have run too close to what the British Government passionately condemned in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) and southern Africa, and their hypocrisy would have been exposed. Since we were supposedly made "legal" in 1973 all of our marches (which were always held in Republican ghetto areas) have been declared "illegal".

"Our posters have been regularly seized; our picketers regularly

arrested; our marchers attacked by the R.U.C. and British army; and our speakers regularly gaoled.

"Thousands of people marched down the Falls Road last Sunday. Were they "conspiring to defeat the aims of justice"?

"The charges against S.D.L.P. member Gary Kennedy are ridiculous, and show the sweeping extent of repression the nationalist community is presently experiencing. By prosecuting this printer Roy Mason and the British Government have tried to ban "Republican News" without having to publicly declare it so. Clearly the December and April seizures of the paper, the arrest and harassment of the press centre staff, and the theft of typewriters and photocopying machines was designed to silence 'Republican News' from expressing the legitimate Republican view of our British problem.

"The seriousness of these prosecutions cannot be over estimated. Yet from a man who had supposedly defeated the I.R.A. last December these prosecutions demolish his God-father theory and they show that Mason-in-panic is a repressive tyrant. Nevertheless in true Republican spirit we shall continue to organise and agitate for Brits out, and for our socialist Republic. The time will come when the British will recognise that we will never bow down under their steel fist of repression."



Belfast Sinn Féin Rally in support of Political Status. Thousands attended in the Falls Road last Sunday.





# MATTRESSES AND BLANKETS

LAST SUNDAY afternoon saw a huge march in Belfast in support of Republican prisoners on the Blanket Protest.

The marchers were in a militant mood and included delegations from Sinn Fein Cumainn from around the country. Nearly ten thousand people marched down the Falls Road to a rally outside Sinn Fein headquarters.

Skulking about in the hedge-rows were the infamous Paras who were up to their usual infantile and perverted tricks; arrogantly pointing their rifles at the marchers in mock firing positions and making obscene sexual gestures at women.

The Sinn Fein speaker was

# HUGE MARCH IN BELFAST

Johnny Johnston from Derry. He told the huge assembled crowd:

"Each and everyone of you is a messenger; each and every one of you is the voice of the men on the blanket."

He received tumultuous applause from the crowd when he concluded "What the men on the blanket are struggling for is not just for political status, but it is to help kick the Brits out — Brits out; Ireland is ours."



# BELFAST ROAD BLOCKING

The Central Relatives Action Committee organised the second of its road blocking protests in the centre of Belfast on Saturday, April 29.

The R.U.C. and the British army showed by their brutal tactics that they are desperate to prevent any publicity about the Political Status issue. Their only concern was to push back the protesters back into the ghetto, but the Relatives Action Committee stood their ground, to display their solidarity with the political prisoners.

A rally was held in King Street, while the road blocking protest was being carried out. The meeting was addressed by representatives of the RAC.

The speakers stressed that the arrest of Sinn Fein members and the suppression

of the 'Republican News' was part of the campaign to disorganise the work of organisations who are supporting the issue of political status. In particular the suppression of 'Republican News' was an attempt to halt the flow of



RAC pickets in Belfast on last Saturday.

information and facts coming out of the H blocks from being publicised.

The speaker concluded: "We must show the British government that we will not be intimidated, we must continue the struggle in the streets."

assembled at St. Stephen's Green at 3 p.m. and march down to the G.P.O. where a public meeting will be addressed by prominent speakers. Everyone is urged to join in this march and protest at the conditions under which Irish men and women are being imprisoned by a foreign power.

## MAIRE DRUMM

A memorial to the late Mrs. Maire Drumm will be unveiled in Milltown Cemetery, Belfast on Sunday, May 14.

Parade will assemble inside the cemetery at noon and march to the Maire Drumm plot at 12.30 hours. A prominent speaker will attend.

## STATEMENT FROM O/C H3 B WING

Today the 1st May in H-Block 3 the following events happened in B Wing. At approximately 10.00 a.m. a high pressure hose was turned on inside the wing. Several cells which house Republican POWs were hosed down and both the POWs and their bedding were soaked through and through.

These men have now nothing to sit on or to lie on as their bed springs are already removed. Their mattresses and blankets are their only comforts left. There is excessive water in the cells and the screws have refused to replace bedding or remove water from

the cell floors.

The screws involved include P. J. Keen, Nodwell and Mrs. Kidd Gresham. The POWs now standing in the cells are as follows: R. O'Rawe, Ed McCann, S. Harte, S. Kelly, T. Holland, F. Harvey, C. Clarke, G. Clarke, P. J. O'Neill, S. Reynolds, G. O'Halloran, N. Ferguson, P. Smyth and E. Harte.

While the screws were hosing down the yard the hose was turned on the POWs cells and as there is no window hook to close the windows, water also came into some cells through the windows.

# Dungannon protest

A crowd of approximately two hundred people turned out in Dungannon last Saturday to protest against the H-Blocks. The protest was very effective, especially as it came as a complete surprise to the Brits/RUC — because it had not been advertised, it was some time before they got themselves organized to stop the protesters.

The crowd marched through the main streets of the town with placards, and handed out leaflets to the shoppers explaining the terrible conditions of the three hundred prisoners in

H-Blocks 3 and 5.

By the time the protesters had marched through the main streets twice the Brits/RUC had set up a block in George's Street but the protesters who wished to have a peaceful demonstration avoided the block by turning up a side street and completely by-passing it.

The crowd then gathered in Ann Street where a short speech was made regarding the plight of the prisoners. The people then dispersed peacefully.

# BONFIRES IN EAST TYRONE

A number of large bonfires were lit in East Tyrone last Thursday night to remind people of the boys who are at present suffering inhuman treatment in H-Block.

The fires which could be seen burning over a good distance proved a very successful reminder to those people not immediately involved in the fate of their fellow countrymen.

# BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

Martin Walsh H-Block Hell Hole Long Kesh.

Birthday Greetings Martin. It is not those who inflict the pain, but those who can endure the most who are the victors. God Bless from Moira, Deirdre and Teresa.

Martin Walsh H-Block Hell Hole Long Kesh.

Birthday Greetings Martin. From your brother Jimmy and wife, also Sadie, Kathleen, Marie and Anne and all your family. Lots of love brother, U.T.P.

Martin Walsh H-Block Hell Hole Long Kesh.

Birthday Greetings Martin. Hope your next one will be spent in Freedom Martin. God Bless from your mother-in-law and father-in-law.

# Dublin office occupied

On Saturday 22nd April in an effort to highlight the inhuman conditions under which Republican prisoners are suffering in H-Block Long Kesh, Dublin Sinn Fein took over and occupied for one hour the Irish Tourism office in O'Connell Street, Dublin.

While the occupation was in force members outside the office distributed H-Block leaflets and a speaker addressed the large crowd which gathered. He told them the reasons for the protest of the blanket men

and of the terrible suffering they are enduring.

After about three quarters of an hour the Gardai decided to break down the door, even though they had been told that it was a peaceful protest and would last only one hour. Inside they took down the names and addresses of the protesters, who, when they emerged were greeted with loud cheers from the crowd assembled outside.

In a follow up to this, there will be a H-Block march on Saturday 6th May. It will



Evening' all!

It's been a bad week. First of all imagine my disgust, nay, horror to receive through the post an envelope from the Leveille magazine with "It's no secret, Colonel B is H. A. Johnstone" stamped on it. This is of course highly reprehensible! I've known old Hugh Johnstone for years, ever since our spy days together in SIGINT — that's the top secret organization that you're not supposed to know about but which you pay for with some £32 million a year in tax, and if he doesn't want to be called H. A. Johnstone but Colonel B that's all right with me. Why should I or anyone else go round telling people that Colonel B is Hugh Johnstone? Why should MPs jump up in the Commons and shout "H. A. Johnstone"? It's all beyond me! Why should the Daily Telegraph refuse to say that old Hugh's going round calling himself Colonel B? What's it all coming to, I ask myself.

Another tragic piece of news was the death of Lord Richard Cecil, second son of the Marquis of Salisbury. Dickie, as he was known to his chums, was the former captain in the Grenadier Guards who did four tours of duty in Ulster before resigning in 1973. He then wrote to the Times newspaper claiming that the politicians had tied the soldiers' hands behind their backs and that they were too soft on the IRA etc. etc. I well remember going on patrol with young Dickie and watching with admiration as he stylishly broke into an old age pensioner's home, wrecked the humble with the gay abandon of one to the manner born and

assaulted a few women and children. Here was a man's man. An aristocrat with all the innate thuggery and cowardice that five centuries of inbreeding can produce. How I envied him! And now, alas, comes the news that nationalist guerrillas in Rhodesia have snuffed out his brief life while he was working for the Rhodesian army, masquerading as a freelance TV reporter.

No more will the Falls echo to his well-bred cries of "Kick the Paddies" as he stubs cigarettes out on some young working class neck, no more will Andersonstown residents see his immaculately well turned out figure as he orders his men to shoot passing

civilians. Ah well! He has gone to that great warriors Valhalla in the sky where he is no doubt already chatting to old comrades like Nairac and Corden-Lloyd about old times. Ewart-Biggs will be dropping in for tiffin, to have a chat about Colonel Johnstone, sorry, Col. B. How I envy them!

And now for something more sordid, I refer, of course, to the case of 21 year old Carl Williamson of the Royal Irish Fusiliers. Carl, who comes from Papermill Road, Goole, got three years for rape. His excuse was that he thought he was the son of Satan! Well, really! I'd have thought the perjury squad could have come up with something better than that. Doesn't look good at all. And what about young Desmond William Boyd (18) of the UDR, whose address was given as C/O Burnbennett Camp, Strabane. He's been fined £20 for being drunk in charge of a sub machine gun and firing it outside his house. Silly boy!

Finally a word about our own RUC. I have been rather disturbed by some remarks made in court recently. In one case a youth who had thrown a brick at a policeman claimed that he had "done it because

# A BAD WEEK FOR THE BRIGADIER AND CHUMS

BY THE  
BRIGADIER

he hated the RUC". This isn't good enough. Of course most people hate the RUC — that's what they're there for, but they don't have to go to extremes, like the two youths who, it is alleged in court "used a policeman as a football" in Queens Street barracks. I just hope this sport doesn't catch on. Goodness knows where it might lead to.

Bye bye for now,  
—The Brigadier.



Frequently on visits I and many of my comrades here in the cages are asked for our "feelings" about the situation in the H Blocks and Armagh. We try in the limited time available and in the best way we can to describe and explain for our visitors our attitudes and "feelings", but it is very difficult.

I thought that it would be a good idea to try and put into words, for the benefit of the many readers of Republican News, those "feelings and attitudes". So, for almost 2 weeks now I have sat and I have written and written

BY R.G.McAULEY, P.O.W.

and the pile of waste paper lying in the corner of my cell has steadily grown.

## BITTER ANGER

I have tried every approach I could possibly think of to tackle this subject and to put into simple and clearly understandable language the frustration and bitter anger

which we feel over the horrendous treatment our comrades are suffering. In the end however the task has proven all but impossible for me.

All I can say is that being prisoners ourselves and having on more than one occasion come to loggerheads with the British over their penal system, we can appreciate perhaps better than anyone else what it is like for our comrades locked up day after day and cut off from the outside world.

Surrounded by walls of concrete and steel, encased in silence, total absolute, isolation — the quiet of the womb, without its warmth and comfort, no sound to break the stillness, four walls, door, a small window. Enclosed in colourless shades of grey, bare cell with solitary figure huddled, naked on the floor, blanket wrapped firmly about him, nothing to read, no one to talk with, surrounded by walls of concrete and steel the 'non political' political prisoner waits....

We understand of course why the British are trying to break our comrades spirit. Most of us were here in Long Kesh when Merlyn Rees announced in 1975 that he was ending "Special Category Status".

We recognised even at that early stage in the subsequent prison struggle that the British were trying to 'depoliticise' the War of Liberation in order to alienate the Republican Movement from the people who have steadfastly supported it over the years.

## FRUSTRATED

However we also realised that Republicans who found themselves imprisoned under the new 'Criminalisation' policy would refuse to accept it meekly and would oppose it bitterly. I must admit though that even we who have had first hand experience of a repressive British penal system, have been surprised and disgusted at the depths of depravity and barbarity to which the British have sunk in trying to break the back of the 'blanket protest.'

As each day therefore passes our concern for the health, both physical and mental, of our comrades increases. Consequently, we are angry and frustrated at the inhuman treatment our friends are receiving and our anger increases as our concern mounts. You the reader in trying to understand our emotional response to the status protest must remember that they are Republicans, members of our movement.

They are our friends, our brothers and sisters, our relations and comrades in arms, who like ourselves long ago made the conscious decision to fight the British. We and they are one and all the decisions and policies of the British Occupation forces will not change that.

We are Prisoners of a War of national liberation who fought the Brit aggressor with bomb, bullet, gun, our lives, our strength the people. you are our comrades in arms, imprisoned as are we, Prisoners of a War against the British foreigner, your weapons were our weapons, your strength, the people, our strength. Prisoners of War — ALL.

Having said all that however, we are also occasionally asked to explain our role, our part in the struggle for Prisoner of War recognition. I'm sure that you the reader will appreciate that I cannot go into any detail of our place in the overall scheme of things, for to do so would perhaps give the enemy an insight into the strategy which the Leadership of the Republican Movement has devised and in which we play a significant role.

However I am giving nothing away when I say that our existence, and the existence of 'Special Cat' is a permanent embarrassment for the British. An embarrassment which they would dearly love to rid themselves of, for our mere existence is proof positive of the political nature of this struggle and of our comrades right to treatment as Prisoners of War.





## BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

Sean Fitzsimmons H.5.

Birthday Greetings on your 21st Birthday. God give you strength and faith to continue your struggle.

—From Brother Bobby and Cousin Alec.

Birthday Greetings to our son Sean on his 21st birthday on May 1st.

There is nothing we can say to make this special day a happy time for you my son no matter what we say.

But when you're sitting all alone and thinking of the past, remember you have a proud family, whose love for you forever will last.

U T P XXXXXX

All our love, Mum, Dad, Brothers and Sisters.

Birthday Greetings to Paul Brennan on the first of May.

On your 25th Birthday and one year on the blanket on the 6th May.

All our love to you and your fellow comrades for the heroic stance you have taken in intensifying the blanket protest, God Bless you, from your father, mother, brothers and sisters.

Happy Birthday Paul (25) on the first of May.

From Linda Gill wee Marting and Dermott and from Marian, Sean and Colin also from Kathleen, Sammy and Kelly. One year on the blanket on the sixth of May hope it's your last.

Happy Birthday Paul on your 25th first of May.

And one year on the blanket from your mates Eddie and Fra always thinking and praying for you and your comrades.

McDade H3 hell hole Long Kesh. One year on the blanket on this your 21st birthday Gerald.

It is not those who inflict the pain, but those who can endure the most who are the victors. God Bless you and your comrades from your Brother Martin, U.T.P.

### SOLIDARITY TELEGRAM FROM TEESIDE

We condemn arrests. Full support for Political Status Campaign.

—From Students Union, Teeside Polytechnic.



I.R.A. Guard of Honour at Jimmy Conlon's funeral.

Jimmy Conlon, who died suddenly in New York on April 26, was one of the Baltimore Four and was jailed from 1973 to 1976 on arms charges in the U.S.A.

His body was flown home and arrived in Dublin Airport on April 29 to be met by a guard of honour of Fianna Eireann.

The body then was transferred to his native Belfast

and buried in Milltown Cemetery.

The Republican Movement extends its deepest sympathy to his widow and four children.



Mourners at Jimmy Conlon's graveside in Milltown Cemetery last Monday.

# NOTES

by

# GORMAC

