



## Irish Republican Prisoners Support Group

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Gerry  
Conlon  
RIP  
1954-  
2014

## Protest Picket against the ill treatment and forcible strip-searching of the three women Republican POWs in Hydebank; Christine Connor, Sharon Rafferty and Nuala Gormley

Saturday 28 June, Ministry of Justice, 3 - 4 pm 102 Petty France, SW1H 9AJ

### Sharon Rafferty forcibly strip-searched in Hydebank

On Wednesday, 14th Aug, Sharon Rafferty, Sean Kelly, Aidan Coney and Gavin Coney were taken out to Omagh Court for their P.I. (preliminary investigation) The 3 men in which is unfortunately now normal practice for Republican prisoners in Maghaberry were forcibly strip-searched before leaving the gaol but in a sinister development it has transpired that female Republican prisoner Sharon Rafferty was also forcibly strip-searched by staff in Hydebank gaol. Sharon was physically restrained by staff and her clothing was forcibly removed. Sharon has been left with physical injuries and no doubt emotionally scarred by this brutal sexual assault. IRPWA demand an end to all strip-searches and strongly condemn this new development whereby female Republican prisoners are forcibly strip-searched in Hydebank.

### Hydebank prisoner Christine Connor denied medical treatment, by Gaol and by Judge

Posted on December 11, 2013

Cogús the (RNU Prisoner department) express increasing concern at what is becoming an evident campaign by the Hydebank authorities to deliberately deny female prisoner Christine Connor much needed outstanding medical treatment and ask what is the logic behind their vindictive refusal?

Three times since her incarceration last August, Christine has been held back from gaining outside hospital treatment for the presence of painful gallstones, this was on the grounds that she had refused a strip search, a practice which is supposedly being reviewed by the prison service who claim to be acting in a spirit of 'goodwill' pending research into alternatives.

On Tuesday December 9th, Christine's legal team applied to the Magistrates court for her temporary release to hospital on compassionate grounds, with her solicitor Michael Madden offering assurances that he himself would accom-

pany her from the Prison grounds to the hospital and back again to Hydebank.

However in a move which called both medical ethics and the good name of Mr Madden into question, the judge refused, citing 'security concerns'. Christine is now suffering considerable pain as a result of prolonged medical neglect of her condition.

It should be noted that Christine has also recently been threatened by the Hydebank administration with a loss of visitation rights, citing spurious suspicions of 'security breaches' as reason for punishment.

RNU hope that these developments do not signal the beginning of vindictive practices in Hydebank, such as have been witnessed in Maghaberry in recent times.

For our part, we intend to make immediate representation to human right bodies (including the International Red Cross) regarding Christine's case. We have engaged with and received promises of assistance from independent councillor Angela Nelson on this issue, and now take this opportunity to call on all those concerned with prisoners rights and women's welfare to ensure that we do not witness yet another episode of neglect within the walls of Hydebank women's prison.

### Gerry Conlon on the political decision to intern the Craigavon 2 for life

*Gerry Conlon died on 22 June. He spent 15 years wrongfully imprisoned for the Guildford bombing. This statement on 31 May was his last political act:*

"Just heard that the government judges have upheld the convictions of the Craigavon Two. It is an appalling decision in light of the new evidence and witnesses that were called on behalf of Brendan and John Paul. Anyone who attended the appeal hearing was struck by the compelling new evidence and the forcefulness of the new witnesses.

What we have seen today is nothing short of disgraceful and a complete whitewash by the judiciary in order to protect corrupt and dishonest elements within the police. The case of the Craigavon Two will not fade away as is hoped by the establishment but it will continue until justice is done and seen to be done.

Those politicians who claim to represent and speak for nationalist, republicans and the working class should be outraged by this judgement, they now have an opportunity to voice their concern and outrage at this blatant injustice."

