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FREE DERRY

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ARE NOW
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FREE DERRY**

NEW

No. 6

PROVISIONAL SINN FEIN -- DERRY CITY -- 15 1st Lúnasa '75 -- August 15

"Believing that the British Government has no right in Ireland, never had any right in Ireland, and never can have any right in Ireland, the presence in any one generation of Irishmen of even a respectable minority ready to affirm that truth, makes that government forever a usurpation and crime against human progress."

-- James Connolly, 1916

B
WHILE THEY BUY THE TIME THEY NEED...

With the Convention approaching the end of its original six-month life, Westminster mouthpiece Merlyn Rees is likely to extend it for another three months. Already its opening day has been put back. They are buying time. It seems almost certain that the British Government will reconsider their original intention to abandon the stagnate Convention, in hopes that the turmoil created over the weekend, by individuals and groups unknown, will jockey the SDLP and the Unionist extremists into an even more cuddly position, to give the illusion that power-sharing is within sight -- if only they be allowed a news lease on life by their British masters

We recognise that the united efforts of the SDLP and the Unionist extremists to condemn totally without evidence the Anti-Internment demonstrations, as an excuse to bring back violence as absurd if not ridiculous beyond belief, as the facts prove.

The steady stream of reports, published in the daily papers, leading up to Anti-Internment Day, were as follows:

LUGGAN Violent mobs attack the Catholic estate with BOMBS, stones, and bottles.

BELFAST Before the gun battle at Divis Flats, reports heard over RUC Brit radios stated that GUNMEN were seen in Wilton Street (Shankill Road). No action was taken by the RUC or Brits to apprehend the Loyalist gunmen.

DERRY Totally ignoring the warnings of Bishop Daly or the lessons of the 1969 Organe demonstration, the "impartial" (1) RUC issued OFFICIAL CLEARANCE to the Loyalist marchers to proceed as usual along the fringe of the Bogside.

GRANT BILLY PAGE POLITICAL STATUS!!!

Billy Page, 18 year old Derryman, is at present the only sentenced Derryman serving his sentence in Crumlin Road Gaol. Billy has been the victim of a campaign by the Prison Authorities, RUC, and B.A. as well as the first "experiment" by the Government to see if by totally denying a political prisoner his political status and the accompanying rights, they can succeed in putting down the entire system of POLITICAL STATUS.

Until Sinn Féin campaigned for Billy to be given his proper food parcel and visiting, Billy Page was kept as a remand prisoner, although he was sentenced. He got the small remand parcel only.

The most unjust -- well, how can you name any one thing in the Court system as most unjust??? -- aspect of Billy Page's treatment revolves around his DENIAL OF POLITICAL STATUS, despite being accused of probably the most political crime going, shooting a Brit.

Billy Page was also subjected to a most unfair (as usual) trial. Although arrested while still a juvenile, HE WAS HELD ON REMAND FOR OVER A YEAR, IN ORDER TO BE OLD ENOUGH TO BE TRIED IN AN ADULT COURT. Tried in a juvenile court and convicted of the alleged crime he was finally convicted of, he would have got off far more lightly.

After being kept on remand more than a year, "getting older", Billy Page was tried and through the evidence of informers and from "evidence" obtained under severe duress, was sentenced to LIFE for shooting a soldier. Yet the State REFUSES TO GRANT HIM POLITICAL STATUS, AND KEEPS HIM AT CRUMLIN ROAD GAOL ALONG WITH OTHER NON-POLITICAL PRISONERS.

SINN FEIN DEMANDS BILLY PAGE TO BE TRANSFERRED TO MAGILLIGAN, for the sake of his family who visit him, AND BE GRANTED POLITICAL STATUS -- which is rightly his -- IMMEDIATELY.

SUPPORT ANY ACTION CALLED BY SINN FEIN SUPPORTING THIS DEMAND!

NOT AGAIN!

Same old story -- but just happened last week: With the Truce, the Brits have eased off certain types of harassment -- until recently. For instance, they no longer lift babies and pet dogs, arresting them as "suspected terrorists."

But a young father from Shantallow, driving home from the "Free State" on his own with his 13-month old child in the car, got a nasty reminder of the Brits' stupidity and cruelty again. He was held for 3½ hours, DESPITE THE YOUNG CHILD WITHOUT ITS MOTHER TO LOOK AFTER IT, and it was only the good luck that a neighbour passed through the checkpoint after a period of time, and lifted the child to take it home, that the baby was released from its unofficial arrest.

BUNCRANA ROAD CHECKPOINT seems desperate on all counts -- not only the pointless long waits to be checked to get out, then the longer wait to be allowed

back home, but the general low-grade morons who seem the only Brits available to man this post. An Executive member of the BCA (and also of Sinn Féin), which is known all over Ireland as a community group, has been stopped for harassment purposes 8 out of 9 times passing through there. When he finally told them he was going to lodge a formal complaint as a member of the Executive of the BCA, the fancy Brit officer said "BCA? What's that? Never heard of it!"

"Rich as Ben Hunter"

"Rich as Ben Hunter" has long been a saying in Derry to describe how it must be to roll in money. Now Ben Hunter (yes, the same one) announces the closure of his bakery, throwing 90 people out of work, at a time when few can expect getting another job.

Too bad there wasn't workers' control of this bakery; as in the New Ireland, Cíne Nua, of Sinn Féin.

FROM THE PRISONS

(This space is reserved each week for contributions sent out from the concentration camps and jails holding our political hostages. We ask you to read their thoughts with care, and remember the words of James Connolly in 1916:

"It is not the will of the majority which ultimately prevails. What ultimately prevails is the Ideal of the noblest in each generation."

From ARMAGH GAOL (received too late for last week's issue of FREE DERRY NEWS
Our apologies. - The Editor.)

A chara,

Once again we have reached the 9th of August. A month that holds a lot of memories for us, memories that we have been forced to re-live all too often.

Four years ago last week internment was introduced in N. Ireland. The Faulkner regime declared it was necessary, due to the level of violence, to bring internment into force once again. They found reason upon reason to justify their decision. But no one can ever justify what is morally and legally wrong, that is, to "detain" men and women for unspecified lengths of time without any conventional form of trial, appeal, or representation.

The 9th of August was only the **start** of the hardships that the Nationalist community have had to face. After one moral injustice was created another and another was needed to back the initial one. Therefore we have seen "internment" renamed & "detention" set up in its place. We have seen the setting up and the downfall of the "tribunals" in Long Kesh. Time and again attempts have been made to "cleanse" the methods that a so-called civilised and democratic system felt they needed to once again trample into the ground a risen people.

Yet four years later we find ourselves in the midst of anti-internment protests. Neither words nor actions could ever truly express the moral rejection and disgust in Northern Ireland at the continuation of internment. All over the North there has been wide-spread protests. Even here in Armagh Gaol we had our own protest. We all refused to be locked up last Friday night. Although it did not have any strong or powerful effect, it was the only way in which we could join with the Nationalist community in showing our British oppressors and the world at large that even after four years we are still as strong and united as we were on the morning of the 9th of August 1971.

It would now seem apparent that the British have admitted in as much as it is possible for them to admit, that internment has achieved nothing. Therefore in an attempt to regain a little self-respect, we have seen the continuous release of small groups of detainees since just before Christmas. Yet internment still exists and could be stepped up again at any minute. So we must all stand firm now as we did then in our protests, not just against the injustice of internment, but also against the injustices of a corrupt state that permitted such violation of basic human rights.

9 August 1975

Is mise le meas,

P.R.O., Armagh Gaol
"Liberty and Strength"

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From MAGILLIGAN PRISONER OF WAR CAMP comes An Giall ("The Hostage") and from Armagh's brothers-in-freedom comes the following article from the latest issue of An Giall.)

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

It is 60 years since the emrgence of the first Women's Rights Organisation in Ireland. At that time the main leader was Countess Markievicz, who was an ardent fighter for the rights of the oppressed

"FARMERS ACTION"

-- or sneaky SDLP?

The SDLP in Park, Co. Derry, are having trouble finding a place to meet. Recently the Feeny-Craigban branch of the SDLP were told by priests at Park that they weren't to hold any meetings in the future in the parochial hall.

They held their last meeting there last Thursday night, under the auspices of the local Farmers Actions Group. (FAG)

However, a prominent local Republican confronted them with their tactic, and told them he would take their masquerade to higher authority. This is now being done.

So if you hear of any new and mysterious-sounding group asking for premises to hold their meetings, check and you may discover they are the local (or Feeny-Craigban) branch of the SDLP, snuffling around on the quiet, trying to find premises under another name...

DANGER--WILD DOGS AT MUFF B.A. CHECKPOINT

A Creggan woman was the victim of an uncontrolled Alsatian who works (like a dog) for the Brits. When coming home from Greencastle on Saturday night, the car Dodie Harkin was travelling in was stopped for harassment purposes. Several other cars were stopped along with her, and more decided to stop and block the checkpoint in protest when they saw these cars subjected to unfair searching and holding. Nearly everyone noticed a HUGE Alsatian pulling a Brit around on his (the dog's) lead. The dog was nearly the size of a small pony.

The soldier made as if to frighten the woman by encouraging the dog to lunge and snap at her. But the dog was far stronger than the Brit, (or was it the Brit's intention?) and went out of control and savagely bit Dodie Harkin's arm. Only her quick jump away from the snarling dog prevented serious injury.

We demand that this dog be kept under control -- the Alsatian, not the soldier -- and we demand action be taken that this soldier who so viciously set the dog off near a woman held for harassment purposes only -- just for badness, no other reason -- won't be able to amuse himself in such sadistic ways in the future...

DO YOU RECOGNISE THEM?

The SDLP held their annual conference in the slick "Manhattan Suite" of Belfast's posh EUROPA Hotel recently. In the words of an observer, it was "a happy section of the Catholic community, a mini-coalition of accountants, publicans, and business executives." Weren't they always?

 * The LYNCH -MOYNE-McDAID *
 * SINN FEIN CUMANN *
 * are holding a *
 * GRAND SUPPER DANCE *
 * on *
 * THURSDAY, 28th AUGUST '75 *
 * Music by 'Strangers' *
 * Admission -- £ 1.50 *
 * Buses will leave Creggan shops *
 * at 8 p.m. and the Bogside *
 * Inn at 8.15 p.m. SHARP *
 * (bus fare 20 p return) *

GREETINGS***GREETINGS***GREETINGS***GREETINGS***GREETINGS***GREETINGS

Ann (Malteaser) Gallagher: HAPPY BIRTHDAY SWEET 16?17?18?19 (Opps!) from your secret admirer...

Ann Gallagher: GUTE GEBURTSTAG vram die German you vant to marry... (Contact Editor, FREE DERRY NEWS, for his last known address)

NOTICE TO ALL BEAVER'S FRIENDS: please get your greetings in early for his birthday, coming up 26th August, to be certain of publication in the appropriate issue of FREE DERRY NEWS.

Thanks. -- The Editor

HAPPY UN-BIRTHDAY, Tommy and Molly Roberts! Keeping the flat warm and tidy, until you get home again. -- An t-Eagarthoir

 BIRTHDAY GREETINGS, LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, etc. are welcome and should be gotten to The Editor by Thursday at the latest for that week's issue of FREE DERRY NEWS. Leave them in at any Sinn Fein Centre, or give to any member of Sinn Fein to pass on.