The CAPTIVE VOICE

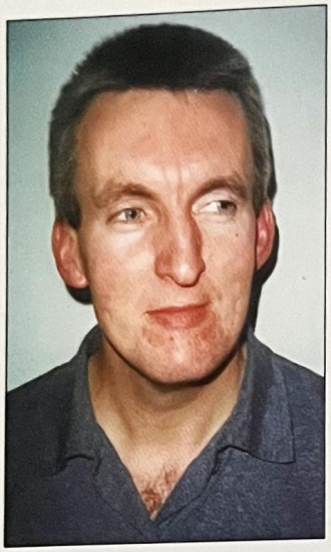
An Glór Gafa

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The Voice of Irish Republican Prisoners of War



Personal note from Laurence McKeown



AS one of the founders of *An Glór Gafa/The Captive Voice* back in 1989 I welcome the opportunity to write these few lines in this the last edition of the magazine. Our intention back then was to produce a high-quality magazine that would be widely available to the public and through which republican prisoners would have their own voice. Not someone else writing what they thought we might think, but we ourselves articulating our own politics, our hopes, desires, fears, doubts, talents and aspirations. It was a part of a process of us 'writing our own history' and arose out of an upsurge in creative writings following the establishment of poetry workshops in 1988. It was followed by the publication of *Nor Meekly Serve My Time: the H-Block Struggle 1976-1981*, which told the personal accounts of 28 prisoners who experienced the blanket protest and hunger strikes. Later The *Crime of Castlereagh*, was produced within the prison, which adapted Bobby Sands' trilogy of *Castlereagh, Diplock Courts* and the *H-Blocks* into dramatic form and which achieved great success.

These were but a few of the significant developments that arose out of the decision taken by republican prisoners that they had a story to tell, that they were the ones best placed to tell it and they also had the talents to tell it in whatever form best suited their needs. It is a source of pride to me, therefore, that the initial aspirations we had for the magazine have been well and truly met. Looking back over the issues that span a ten-year period the consistent quality is ever present as is the wit, the sincerity and the artistic talent. To all those who have contributed to the production of the magazine over the years in whatever capacity we owe a large debt of gratitude. Likewise to those who distributed the magazine far and wide.

In other circumstances it would be sad to see such an exciting, innovative publication come to an end but if it signals the release of all republican prisoners then it is to be welcomed. Let's hope though that the creative talents and radical voices that came together to make *An Glór Gafa* the success that it was continue to find expression on the outside. Our voices may no longer be held in captivity but that doesn't mean that they are totally free. Beirigí bua uilig.

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■ ByNoel McHugh, H-Blocks

The CAPTIVE VOICE



An Glór Gafa

IN THE AUTUMN OF 1989 the first edition of *THE CAPTIVE VOICE/AN GLOR GAFA* was published. At that time there were hundreds of republican prisoners being held in gaols in Ireland, England, Europe and the U.S.

A series of prison campaigns were being waged, all of them highlighted in the pages of *An Glor Gafa*. They included the plight of Life Sentenced POW's in the six and twenty-six counties, the simmering, unresolved, issue of segregation in Crumlin Road gaol, the unrelenting policy of strip-searching against women POW's in Durham gaol and Maghaberry and the campaign for the repatriation of Republican POW's held in gaols in England.

Over the course of the next ten years *The Captive Voice* continued to raise these and many other issues of direct concern to Republican POW's and our families. Back in 1989 the first editorial asserted that ... *"Through individual and collective struggle and sacrifice, the idea of gaol as a breaking yard has been thrown back in the faces of those who imprison us. Together with our families, friends and comrades who have supported us constantly in so many ways and who suffer because of our imprisonment, we have thwarted all attempts to break our resistance."* Those words are as relevant and as important today.

The issue of political prisoners has been used as a political football by every negative and begrudging element imaginable over recent months. There is gross ignorance of the reality of prison issues fuelled by wildly inaccurate and misleading stories in the media. The constant attempts to link the release of prisoners to everything from punishments arising from the lack of a credible police service to the question of weapons would be laughable if it were not for the seriousness of the situation. There is not and there cannot be any linkage between these and the myriad of other excuses proffered and the release of political prisoners.

We are political prisoners. This fact is not in doubt or up for discussion. We have been active participants in this conflict. Resolution of conflict requires that all of the issues that gave rise to struggle be addressed. In the context of this struggle the vehicle for beginning that process has been identified as the Agreement reached by all the relevant parties on April 10th 1998.

Republicans are on record as having major reservations about the design of that vehicle. Republican POW's share those concerns and we have privately and publicly stated this. The journey thus far has been torturous and costly. But the destination remains the same. There is nothing to say that each fresh bend will not conceal more dangers. If the concerted and well-guided campaign of murder and intimidation directed against the entire nationalist community is anything to go by then our concerns are well founded.

Republicans should not be side-tracked or distracted. We must remain focused. Elsewhere in this edition the importance of unity throughout the years of prison struggle is highlighted. Now more than ever, perhaps Republicans need to maintain unity.

In December 1998 Geraldine Ferrity, the last woman POW, was released from Maghaberry. Our comrades have been repatriated and transferred from prisons in England. No Republican POW's are currently held in prisons in Europe or the U.S. At the time of writing there are 21 POW's held in Portlaoise and 69 POW's held in the H Blocks of Long Kesh. However there cannot be any complacency around the issue of prisoners.

The 'accelerated release' dates for those POW's held in Long Kesh are set by the Sentence Review Commission. All 'qualifying prisoners' still in prison by July 2000 will be eligible for release at that time. But that date can be moved by the British Secretary of State. All POW's still have their original 'long term' release dates. So in effect these POW's have 3 release dates all of which can be interfered with, for different reasons and in different ways.

Those comrades held in Portlaoise are in a more precarious position. There is no system for setting release dates other than those in place before April 1998. So far the Department of Justice, which oversees the Portlaoise situation, has refused to set 'accelerated release' dates. Those POW's repatriated have been told that the question of their release is still a matter in which the British Home Secretary, Jack Straw, has a say.

It is therefore vitally important that Republicans continue to raise the issue of the release of all political prisoners. No aspect of this process has happened of its own accord. Republicans along with others created the conditions that allowed the political process to develop. Even with its design faults the vehicle for change has the potential for moving forward. Republicans have displayed, by their discipline and determination, their willingness to contribute constructively and positively. But we must continue to lobby and organise for change.

Failure on the part of Unionism to live up to its responsibilities may well destroy what has been built. Leaving the causes of conflict unresolved may well be the only way that Unionism, in its present form, can see itself surviving.

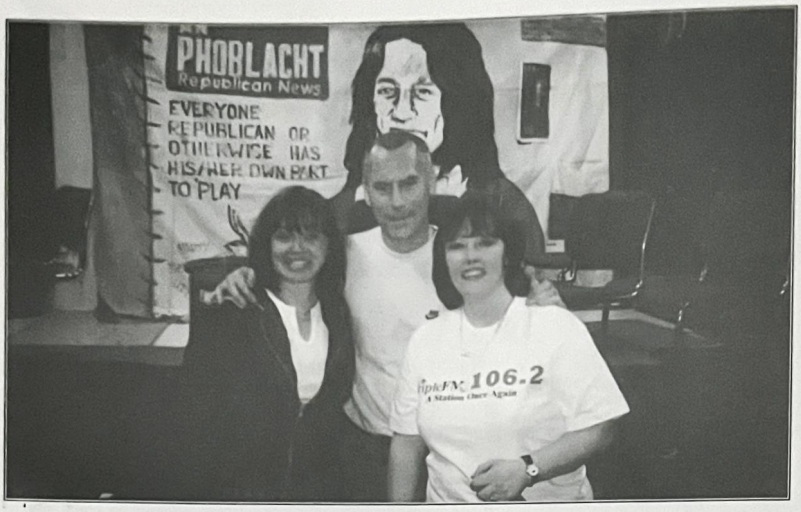
Prison struggle has taught us not to be afraid of change. Regardless of what lies ahead we remain confident and determined. This could very well be the last edition of *The Captive Voice*. That Voice has been loud and strong over the years.

We extend our thanks to our families, friends and comrades who have stood with us through thick and thin. We salute the families of our dead comrades. Their sacrifices have not been in vain. They have inspired us and strengthened us.

"Mura bhfuil siad in inmhe an fonn saoirse a scriosadh, ni bheadh siad in inmhe tú fein a bhriseadh. Ni bhrisfidh siad mé mar tá an fonn saoirse, agus saoirse mhuintir na hEireann i mo chroi.

"Tiocfaidh lá éigin nuair a bheidh an fonn saoirse seo le taispeaint ag daoine go léir na hÉireann ansin tchífidh muid eiri na gealaí."

— Bobby Sands, H Blocks, Long Kesh, March 17th 1981.



Just a Prisoner's Wife

● Christine Poland, Pádraic Wilson and Chrissie Keenan (right) the Cast and Production Team of *Just a Prisoner's Wife* B wing H5, 14 May 1999

ON MAY 14th 1999 the cast of *Just a Prisoner's Wife* performed the play in B wing H5. All republican POW's were able to attend. The play raised issues not necessarily always appreciated by prisoners. For a change it presented aspects of life not aired often enough when the question of prisoners arises. The silent prisoners in this conflict are too often the wives, partners, mothers and children of republican activists. Their stories need to be told over and over and louder and louder. Just a Prisoner's Wife is a start, may there be much more to come.

Here are two recollections of the events surrounding the performance of the play in the H Blocks. The first is written by cast member and former POW, Christine Poland. The second by Dáithí Adams, currently a POW in the H Blocks.

THE WOMEN INVOLVED in *Just a Prisoner's Wife* all come from community backgrounds, some are ex POW's, some were and still are the wives of prisoners, past and present, and some are political activists.

The group was brought together by Chrissie Keenan from Feile an Phobail,who in one way or another coerced us all into doing this play for International Women's Day. We all thought that it was to be a one off show. Yeah Right!

The first performance of *Just a Prisoner's Wife* was staged in the Felons Club in Belfast on March 8th 1996. The play was at times a caricature of the journeys of women travelling back and forth to and from the various gaols. At other times it showed the very real issues and dilemmas faced by both prisoners and their families. It even showed the often loved and at other times the often dreaded bus driver.

Demand for the play was huge and we played to packed audiences from Garvaghy Road to Ardoyne, and from Derry to Dundalk. We staged the show several times again in Belfast in between. We even won the first ever Arts Partnership Award in Belfast.

After a while we flippantly said that we would not perform the play again unless we got permission to go into the gaols. We had applied for such permission on and off for two years, but had always been refused. Then somebody somewhere had a change of heart. We were first of all given the go-ahead to go into Portlaoise, followed by clearance to go into Long Kesh.

We were like a troop from the Royal Shakespeare Company with our backdrop, our props and suitcases full of makeup. For the trip to the Blocks we had to bring in dozens of freshly buttered baps, essential props, of course.

To be able to perform the play in front of men, many of whom had spent over twenty years in various gaols, was a privilege. On both occasions it was not until days later that the impact of where we had been finally set in. The history of both places is well known to us. But it was never so stark as when we were shown a cell that Joe McDonnell had been held in, or when marks from hosing, carried out during the Blanket Protest, were pointed out to us. None of this was lost on us.

Although it was a pleasure for us to spend time on the wings of Portlaoise and H5, in the latter we had the bizarre spectacle of eight of us lying on a bunk covered with a Barbie quilt, we can understand the feelings of those who would prefer not to spend an hour in the place let alone ten years. There are thousands of people who would have given anything to be in our shoes for the experience of being within in the walls of such historic places, and indeed, there were a lot of the POW's who would have given anything to swap clothes with us not to be in such a place. But none of us would swap places with you for the world. You are always in our thoughts. Thank you and take care.

■ CHRISTINE POLAND

WHEN NEWS filtered through that the cast of *Just a Prisoner's Wife* were to stage their first and best known play in the Blocks for us poor neglected prisoners, it was greeted with a wave of overwhelming joy and pleasure.

This was a first for us. We have had delegations of political activists from as far afield as South Africa and of course we have had delegations from our Party activists - minus my big cousin I might add, as well as many visits from other groups and from other dignitaries. But never before had we had the pleasure or experience of being entertained and 'educated' by women from our own community who were to privilege us with an inspiring and awesome display of great acting talent.



I, like many others awaited their arrival eagerly; it was a chance for some of us to renew old acquaintances and friendships with members of the cast who many of us had not seen for a while.

My old comrade, Cheeser Crawford, and I were not merely interested in social chit-chat. Being well read individuals, having studied IBSEN, O'Casey and Yeats we were equally interested in the content of the actual drama. Others might say that we are just full of it.

While Cheeser and I adopted the more laid back, casual approach others had gone into overdrive - Gerry Mackin and Paul Stitt to name but a few. By God did they work hard? The prison Tuck-Shop was inundated with emergency orders for talcum powder and after-shave. Flash McVeigh had even ordered heavy-duty sandpaper! I know he is rough looking in the mornings, but sandpaper...

Anyway folks, we all gathered in the canteen of B wing H5 awaiting the arrival of the ensemble. As I mingled with the throng (I said THRONG) I couldn't help but notice the heavy mix of smells and I thought for a fleeting moment that I was at the Chelsea Flower Show.

When the cast eventually arrived the smoothies went into action. All the best Long Kesh chat up lines were being thrown in. But these women were too wise for any of that. Frank O'Kane, from South Derry, was almost hoarse from trying out his small repertoire of chat up lines. Try the Ballroom of Romance when you get out Frank. (Frank has since been released and was last seen leaving the Ballroom alone.)

The sensitivities of some comrades never cease to amaze me. For example Finbar Grieve was perplexed by the play's title. He asked me if he would be allowed to attend and when I asked why he replied "Sure Dáithí, I haven't got a wife."

After we had exhaustive discussions with cast members on the literary merits of the play, Cheeser and I finally gave our approval for proceedings to commence. The lights were dimmed, curtains were drawn and the show commenced. And what a show it was. We were captivated. Not Tony Doc, though, he kept nipping out to the toilets every five minutes to check his hair in the mirror. I thought that I was bad but Tony is something else, he carries four combs, while I have only got two! (Question from a confused editor - Why, Dáithí, do you possess even one comb?)

The play contained all the right themes, hardship, loneliness, frustration and love. There was also the banter and the laughs which takes place between the bus driver and the passengers, the prisoner's wives. I don't think that the role of the driver can be underestimated. I feel that he - unconsciously maybe - plays an important role in the life of prisoner's wife in that he can help raise a smile and help ease some of the pre-visit tensions Such tension can exist when a tired and worried wife struggles with the best way to cope with some disturbing family news she has to carry on a visit

The craic and camaraderie that was portrayed between the visitors on their journey appears to provide an outlet for the women. The burden shared seemed to be a burden halved, if only for the duration of the journey. Their ability to make light of their own plight is something that we could all learn from.

The strains of trying to maintain a relationship over a long period of time were of course all too evident, especially when one of the women finally announced to her friends that she was embarking upon another relationship. She wasn't rebuked by her friends for this revelation. They more than anyone else know "the loneliness of the long distance wife."

There were moments in the play when I felt very sad particularly when they touched upon the effects on the children. That hit me hard. When one mother decided to withhold from her husband the fact that their son was involved in joy riding I felt gutted for her.

One of the consequences of this forced and unnatural separation of husband and wife is that the woman is not just a wife and a mother but she must also adopt the additional role of the absent father. Each one of those lovely women had their own story to tell and they told it well. Nothing that I will write can do justice to all that they experience. The cast all did a remarkable job in conveying to us, the prisoners, a glimpse of how difficult life is for the wife of a prisoner.

To Pam and the entire cast I would like to say thank you for not only entertaining us but for also opening the eyes of some us. To all those wives and partners out there I salute you all. You are the real heroes, without you we are nothing.

Last but not least, for me, it was just great to see 'ordinary women from working class Belfast escape from behind the kitchen sinks and all the other places they are told to stick to. I hope that this discovery, on your part, of such great talents spurs you on to even greater things. You deserve every success.

■ **DÁITHÍ ADAMS, H BLOCKS.**

HOMEWARD BOUND

PADDY KELLY was one of the last Irish Republican prisoners to be repatriated from England. Here he gives a highly personal account of the events leading up to his repatriation and eventual emotional reunion with his family. Paddy is still held in Portlaoise Prison serving 25 years. His sentence was handed down in the Old Bailey. The Dublin government has still failed to initiate a structured process of releases.

Paddy was given temporary release to speak on behalf of the POW's in Portlaoise at this years Sinn Fein Ard Fheis.



● **The Balcombe St. lads, Eddie Butler, Hugh Doherty, Joe O'Connell and Harry Duggan**

IN DECEMBER 1997, after over 15 months on remand in Belmarsh Prison, Brian McHugh, Jimmy Murphy and myself were sentenced to twenty-five years on charges of possession and conspiracy at the Old Bailey.

It was very a cold morning as we climbed on board the prison truck that would take us to our new prisons. Although we had no idea exactly which prisons we would end up in we knew that it would be one of the four dispersal prisons: Frankland in the north of England, Full Sutton in Yorkshire, Whitemoor in Central England or Long Lartin also pretty much Central England.

For most of our time in Belmarsh we had been categorised as 'Exceptional High Risk Category A' prisoners which meant that we had closed family visits and for our first six months closed legal visits, which made it impossible to try and prepare a proper defence for our trial.

We refused to take closed family visits, as we were very conscious of the negative effect these had on our families, especially on young children.

By nature young children are tactile creatures. Not yet possessing a fully developed facility of verbal communication skills they rely instead on touch and on physical forms of expression. Children need to be held as this engenders much needed feelings of security. Seeing their fathers through thick glass, unable to touch or feel, would be very upsetting for everyone concerned.

We met many other Irish POW's during our stay in Belmarsh. The men charged with the escape from Whitemoor SSU were there: Peter Sherry, Danny McNamee, Liam McCotter, Liam O'Duibbir, Dingus Magee and Andy Russell from London. At one stage there were seventeen Irish Pow's in Belmarsh

By the time we left Belmarsh only two Irish prisoners remained on remand, Mick Gallagher and Seamus McArdle.

We had been decategorised to 'High Risk Category A' after the second IRA cessation in July and as a consequence we were able to take Open family visits. Although 'open' was defined in its narrowest of terms.

Other lads we had been on remand with, Gerry Hanratty, Donal Gannon, Eoin Morrow; Francie Rafferty, Johnny Crawley and Pat Martin had been sentenced to 35 years in June and had since been sent to the various dispersal prisons. We knew that we would be meeting up with them again.

Brian McHugh was sent to Whitemoor while Jimmy and myself were sent to different wings in Full Sutton. Shortly afterwards Brian applied for transfer to the six counties and Jimmy and I applied for repatriation to the twenty-six counties.

Of those already in Full Sutton Peter Sherry and Donal Gannon were on a wing adjacent to mine, which shared an exercise yard. Eoin Morrow was on Jimmy's wing and Dingus Magee was on another. We could all meet up at weekends on the sports field. Coming from an SSU where a maximum of eleven prisoners are held on any one wing, but with usually only about six or seven at the same time, it was some change to find myself on a wing with up to a hundred other prisoners. So to meet old comrades and see familiar faces was very helpful.

We had been in Full Sutton about a month when news came that some lads were to be repatriated. Among those going were Peter, Donal and Eoin. We were delighted for them and their families, but we would undoubtedly miss their company. Several days earlier Gerry Hanrattty, Johnny Crawley, Frankie Rafferty and Liam O'Duibhir had been moved from other dispersal prisons and

they were also to be repatriated. To see a group of seven POW's being moved to Ireland was really terrific.

There were now only three of us left, Dingus, Jimmy and myself. Dingus proved to be a worthy morale officer and we had some good laughs while ambling round the sports field at weekends.

The visit area, though not great was nevertheless an improvement on Belmarsh. Dispersal systems are paranoid when it comes to security. High Risk prisoners are subject to continuous monitoring and scrutiny. A trip to the visit area entails being collected and escorted by a screw. You are made to stand on a platform while a hand held metal detector is passed over your body, this is known as 'wanding' You are then strip-searched and must then change into a set of 'sterile clothes' (clothes that must remain in the visits area). Cameras monitor your every move; one is even positioned directly above where you and your visitors sit This procedure is then repeated in reverse after the visit. High Risk visits are held separate from the rest of the prison populations visits in a much smaller room. I had not seen my children in eight months, and not even all of the above could not infringe upon my delight at seeing them.

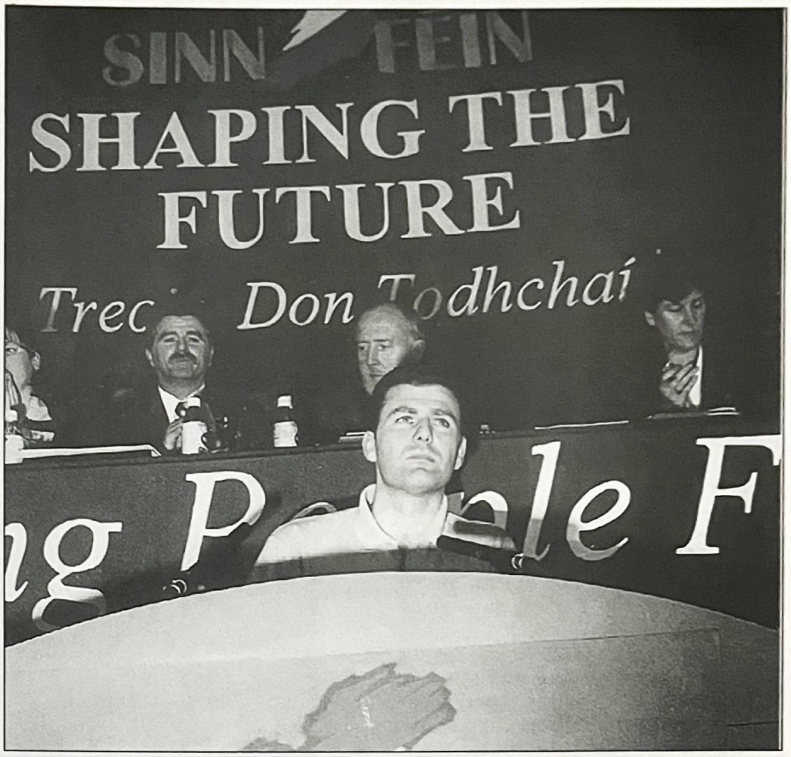
The Good Friday Agreement (GFA) had been signed in April and the reaction of ordinary prisoners had been touching. Many came up to us, shaking hands, expressing wishes for our swift return to Ireland. Only the screws, who could not hide their contempt, displayed annoyance at the prospect of prisoners being released early.

Of course we did wonder if the Agreement would speed up our return to Ireland and our hopes received a boost when we heard that Dingus and the Balcombe St. lads, Hugh Doherty, Eddie Butler, Harry Duggan and Joe O'Connell were to be repatriated at long last. These latter four men had spent twenty-two years in various English prisons.

By this time Jan Taylor had joined us from Whitemoor. He had already applied for repatriation. Our families were quite optimistic about our swift return to Ireland. But our hopes received a knock back when Jan was suddenly 'Swagged' (a prison term for being moved without notice to Frankland. We felt that the Brits were going to hold onto the remaining group of POW's for some time.

Mick Gallagher and Seamus McArdle had been sentenced by this time. Then in June Brian McHugh was transferred to the six counties. Mick was sent to Long Lartin and Seamus landed in Belmarsh. Luckily for Seamus he was only there a few weeks before being transferred to the six counties.

Nick Mullan, who had been fighting against his conviction for almost ten years, was also in Long Lartin (Mick's conviction was subsequently over turned).



● **Paddy speaking on behalf of the POW's in Portlaoise at 1999 Sinn Fein Ard Fheis**

The moves to the six counties gave rise to optimistic expectations among our families.

These expectations were somewhat dented when we learnt that in spite of the GFA we could not apply for consideration for early release as long as we remained in England. This was due to the fact that the legislation enacted to facilitate the early release programme did not cover POW's held in prisons in England. We were in a limbo. We found ourselves in the same predicament that many Irish POW's had faced before. We were hostages to the whim of mandarins in Whitehall.

Seven months after the GFA, Christmas was approaching, my family felt that they should make plans to visit, as they had not been over in months. We had been holding back on visits to avoid all of the hassle and expenditure that this entailed for the family.

Down through the years the families of Irish POW's have had to endure great hardships and heartaches. Sometimes after great expense and travelling long distances to an English prison they have been informed that their loved one was moved to another prison maybe 200 miles away. The distress for families and prisoners alike in these circumstances has been immense.

To maintain any type of bond through a phone line is difficult at the best of times. To maintain a family link by phone when you are restricted to the amount of time you can buy added to the sight of a screw wearing earphones monitoring your every word can take a lot of getting used to.

A Saoirse delegation, that included my wife Edel, visited us in November. In the brief time we managed to talk together we decided to leave the plan for a visit until after Christmas, not least because of the cost involved.

About three weeks later while I was in the Education department a security screw informed me that he had papers for me to sign when I returned to the wing I discovered that like me Jimmy had signed his repatriation consent papers.

Repatriation is a tripartite agreement. In order for it to happen the country in which the prisoner is held and the country to which the prisoner wishes to go must agree to the move. Thirdly the prisoner must give consent.

With only two weeks to go before Christmas we did not know if our moves would take place before or after. Some POW's have waited months after signing consent forms before any movement. Our families were more optimistic than we were. Their optimism was to be well founded.

Less than a week after, during a lock-up, my cell door was suddenly opened. There were about eight screws crowded around, looking very glum. One of them

threw an empty sports bag on my bed and grunted "howl long would it take you to pack that?" I told him that it would take me about ten minutes.

I shouted my goodbyes out the window and I could hear Jimmy doing the same. The place erupted with prisoners banging on doors and widows. It was a touching experience and I genuinely felt for a lot of the ordinary guys who we were leaving behind.

Jimmy and myself were brought to an isolation wing and were joined a short time later by Jan Taylor and Mick Galllagher. The next morning after all of the usual security procedures we were taken in convoy to an airport where we boarded a waiting plane and in all honesty I felt that the plane was not capable of making the journey.

As we approached the Irish coast I allowed myself to finally believe that I was really going home. I shall never forget Lambay Island and Howth Head on the horizon as we started our descent for Baldonnell.

My thoughts were of my family, especially my wife and our three young children It was a strange feeling being among the last Irish Republican prisoners in England and I thought about the history of our country and of how many Irish men and women spent so many years in English prisons. I thought of those who died on hunger strike alone in an English prison cell. Of those beaten senseless by mindless screws. Of the families who stuck by the POW's through thick and thin. I was very conscious that I had been extremely lucky. My comrade Diarmuid O'Neill had been shot dead only yards from me. I was very conscious of the fact that my family could come and visit me in Portlaoise whereas Diarmuid's family would never see their son again.

I had only spent two years and three months in English Prisons. Joe O'Connell, Harry Duggan Eddie Butler and Hugh Doherty had spent twenty-two years of their lives in various prisons in England and had suffered the worst excesses of the British penal system. Each of them had spent longer in solitary confinement, sometimes in one continuous stint, than I had for my whole time there. These four men had lost fathers, mothers and close family members while in England and never once were they allowed out, even for one hour.

When we arrived in Portlaoise the POW's warmly greeted us. Among them were lads we had met while in England, others were new acquaintances but and most importantly, they were all comrades.

It was only our third day back when we were informed by our O/C, Gerry Hanratty, that we were to receive temporary release over the Christmas period. I was still trying to get my head around the fact of being back in Ireland, albeit in an Irish prison, let alone the prospect of spending five days at home with my wife and children. It was something that I had not allowed myself to think about since being sentenced to twenty-five years in England.

On the morning that I actually arrived home it was about 8.30 am when I stepped inside my front door. My three children were sound asleep and the pleasure I felt at being able to waken each of them up with a kiss on the forehead was only matched by the sounds of delight that emanated from my children. I will never forget the look of excitement on their little faces.

For the five days I spent all of my time with my wife and children and it was wonderful being a proper husband and father again.

The time passed quickly and as I walked in through the gates of Portlaoise saying goodbye to my wife we felt much better than when we previously parted after visits in England. We both knew that now regular family contact could be maintained; we could be in daily contact also as the cost of phone calls was much cheaper than when I was in England.

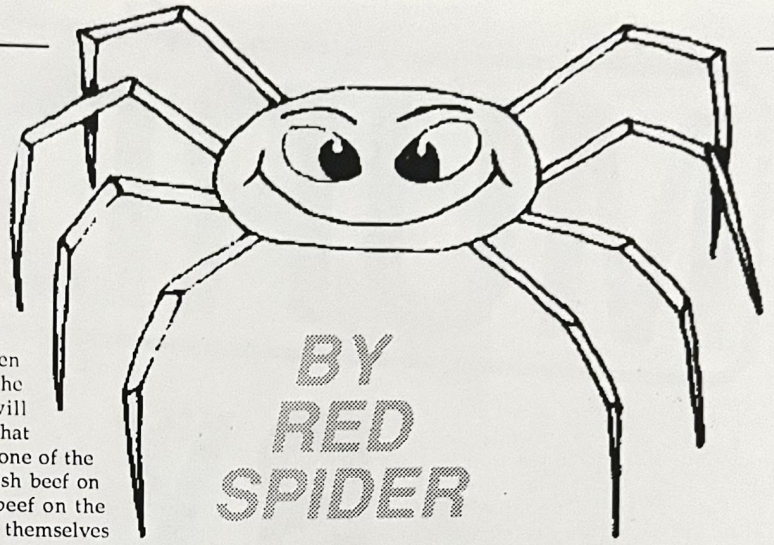
Being in an Irish prison and being able to avail of Home Leave is undoubtedly welcome. But this in no way should be seen as a credible substitute for the commitments to prisoner releases that the Dublin Government signed up to, and that was endorsed by the overwhelming majority of the population in the referenda on the island of Ireland. All those remaining POW's in Portlaoise fulfil the criteria laid down in the GFA that allows them to be released.

It must be remembered that the primary motivation of republican prisoners is not to gain early release. We desire to see an end to British interference in the internal affairs of the Irish nation, an end to partition and the establishment of a 32 County Democratic Republic.

■ **PADDY KELLY, PORTLAOISE.**



"For the five days I spent all of my time with my wife and children and it was wonderful being a proper husband and father again"



JUST BECAUSE we are in prison does not mean that the issues that effect the rest of the world have no concern for us.

Oh no! We are as tuned in and as alert to the issues that count as the rest of you are, well some of us ... Take the whole beef crisis. Many POW's are from rural backgrounds. They understand only too well how much this situation has impacted upon the livelihoods and well being of thousands involved in many aspects of farming. Even the odd city dweller trying to show that he knows his porkers from his heifers will throw in his tuppence worth. So it was that during the relatively recent faux pas by one of the Windsors, who indulged in a bit of Welsh beef on the bone, during a ban on the sale of beef on the bone, that several irate prisoners found themselves debating this whole issue.

For Ta McWilliams a native of Ardoyne and therefore as urbane, sorry urban as you'll get, the biggest bone of contention was the fact that with the ban on the sale of beef on the bone in place that the prison kitchens "Keep sending us up those pork chops".

Yes, Ta knows his porkers from his heifers.

CHEESER CRAWFORD is known as a bit of a film buff... well if you spent your days glued to a TV screen so would you be ... his wide store of useful and at other times absolutely useless tit-bits has helped settle many a heated argument. With this type of pedigree Cheeser is often looked up to by others.... this in itself is a cause for much wonder given that Cheeser requires assistance to reach the sinks in the wash house.

On an average day you will be almost guaranteed to find an old classic gem from the heyday of the big film studios on one of the many TV's now dotted about the wings. Alan Ladd was the star of one such recent feature. During the film the Bowie knife formed a major part of the plot. One of the younger lads asked, "Is that knife named after the character in the film?" Cheeser, ever eager to display his knowledge, quipped in "Yeah, it's actually named after David Bowie"... Ground control to Major Tom.

THE RECENT AWARD of the Nobel Prize to Messrs Hume and Trimble has not, unfortunately, done a lot to increase some people's understanding of the world beyond the shores of the Emerald Isle.

A question on a recent television quiz asked "What nationality was Alfred Nobel?" Raymie Wilkinson ever ready to prove that his City and Guilds for catering were not achieved on good looks alone fired out the answer as quick as a flash "Swedish, because they all go to Switzerland to collect their prizes".

Yes, we share the concern that this type of obvious breakdown in the remaining brain cells signifies, but not even we were prepared for what followed.

Gerry Butler, after recovering from near hysterical laughter, rushed in to relay the tale to Paddy Murray. Paddy listened, with no sign of finding anything wrong in what he was hearing, and quite calmly and seriously said to Gerry "Well you can see how he got mixed up as Sweden is near Norway"... I kid ye not... these guys are scary.

GERRY BUTLER himself encountered some problems not so long ago which might have as much to do with spending time with Raymie and Paddy as with anything else. Although sadly for Gerry his problem was not confined to the boundaries of Long Kesh, where there is at least an excuse for some of the madness.

It is only when you step outside of this place that you begin to realise that the outside world is a complicated place. In here everything is basically laid on. Most things follow a pattern. It is easy to spot when something is amiss. There is usually someone at hand to help if an awkward or difficult situation arises.

Poor Gerry. He was faced with quite a decision during a recent parole. Feeling hungry and wanting to delight his taste buds with different food in the real world he opted for a pizza. He confidently entered an new pizzeria in his local area and ordered himself one with 'everything on it'. Once his order was ready the young assistant enquired if he would like it cut. Gerry replied that yes he would. "Do you want it cut in four or eight?" Gerry pondered this for a moment before replying "Just cut it in four, I don't think that I could eat eight bits".

SOMETIMES the foolishness of having stereotypical views of others is exposed in the strangest of ways. For example a common mistake made by city dwellers is in assuming that anyone coming from a rural background must automatically be au fait with all things concerning the great outdoors. This includes the belief that all such people are budding ornithologists.

This was exposed as a myth in quite clear terms recently while a number of men were walking around the yard in H3. A large seagull flew overhead causing Michael Caraher to exclaim, "Look, there's a hawk!" The surprised glances from his companions led to a quick re-evaluation "No, sorry it's an owl". This provoked even stranger looks. We are all aware that to the horror of many unwelcome Brits a lot of strange things have been known to fly through the air in the beautiful skies above South Armagh. But seagulls disguised as hawks and owls... don't think so Hawkeye.

MURDER BY PROXY 1999

UVF 1914. 'On 24 April 24,000 rifles and five million rounds of ammunition were landed from a ship at Larne. Other arms arrived at Bangor and Donaghadee. Although such gunrunning was strictly against the law, neither the military nor the police interfered in any way.'

The Birth of Modern Ireland

UDA 1988. 'He was regularly supplied with files on hundreds of nationalists and his handlers permitted him to import arms from South Africa, arriving in the North in January 1985. The shipment landed on the South Down coast included 200 AK47 rifles, 90 Browning pistols, 500 fragmentation grenades, 30,000 round's of ammunition and a dozen RPG rocket launcher's.'

Cornal Ryan on British agent Brian Nelson's role in the rearming of loyalists. *The Starry Plough.*



ONLY RECENTLY has the murder of Rosemary Nelson forced the whole question of state collusion to the very top of the political agenda here in Ireland and indeed internationally.

Many of those voices, either in politics, civil society or the media who quite deliberately chose to remain silent in the face of the mounting evidence of collusion, were forced to address the disturbing circumstances surrounding her murder. But this collusion, or more precisely, manipulation has been a constant feature of Britain's colonial project here in Ireland. From the arming of the original UVF in 1914, through the pogroms of the 1920s, 1930s and 1960s, to the current campaign of assassination and intimidation of nationalists, the manipulation of loyalists by the British State has left thousands of nationalists dead. Thousands more have been forced from their homes and places of employment For northern nationalists, collusion between the British security forces and loyalist death squads is simply an historical and contemporary fact of life.

COUNTER-INSURGENCY - COLLUSION AS POLICY

The fomenting of ethnic and religious divisions has of course been a central feature



● To state that the British manipulate loyalists is not to suggest that they have complete control over them nor that British forces collude with them in each and every attack upon nationalists and republicans. Loyalists quite clearly have a mind and agenda of their own and are ruthlessly determined to murder in pursuit of those objectives

of British colonial policy throughout the world for centuries. Helping turn clann against clann in Scotland, Sikhs and Hindus against Muslims in India, tribe against tribe in Africa - by favouring one group with patronage and when the need arose, weapons, Britain (just like the other colonial powers) furthered its own selfish interests. In more modern times this type of manipulation has come under the label of counter-insurgency and since the Second World War, Britain has had ample opportunity to develop its counter-insurgency techniques in such diverse places as Palestine, Kenya, Malaya and Cyprus.

It was in Kenya Malaya and Cyprus that a young British military intelligence officer, Frank Kitson, developed his own theories on counter-insurgency. He was later to apply these theories in practice against tile IRA when he became the commander of British troops in Belfast in the period 1970-72. In 1971 in his book, Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency, Kitson detailed the steps that he believed were necessary to isolate and defeat the IRA.

He advocated intensive psychological warfare against the IRA with the aim of causing demoralisation within its ranks and the creation of splits. To this end, Kitson argued, the British should employ a variety of tactics: the financing of fake peace-movements the setting of pseudo republican groups in nationalist areas and the manipulation of loyalist groups in order to orchestrate a campaign of assassination and intimidation, which would both terrorise the rebellious population and remove key republican activists. In recognition of his work and the significant part he played in developing British military policy here in Ireland, in 1932 Kitson was promoted to General and appointed Commander-in Chief of Land Forces (UK).

MURDER BY PROXY

To state that the British manipulate loyalists is not to suggest that they have complete control over them nor that British forces collude with them in each and every attack upon nationalists and republicans. Loyalists quite clearly have a mind and agenda of their own and are ruthlessly determined to murder in pursuit of those objectives. Unionist spokespersons such as Ken Maginnis often quote the statistics of arrests and convictions of loyalists by the RUC as evidence of RUC impartiality and the impossibility of widespread collusion, but this is merely a smoke screen and deliberately ignores the often sophisticated and at times, subtle, nature of collusion.

There is quite obviously a considerable level of direct collusion between locally recruited members of the RUC, RIR and loyalist paramilitaries. This is evidenced by the number of serving members of both forces who have been charged and convicted with membership of loyalist paramilitary

Mo victortia

'And this enemy
has not ceased to be victorious
Walter Beqjamin

Samhain eile.
'I have missed you.'

White ribbons hanging
On a white-thorn. Burst
Of sun-cloud
At your bedside
laying claim your soul.

Unsouls night.
Coffin flowers;
Like rose-petals carpeting
The roads and pathways out of sight

We have stood,
eight million
spellbound
hunger roaring in our ears
for Salvation,
liberation.
All died
On our piece of earth,
Green-mouthed on our hillsides.

With pikes and graipes
caught cannon balls
in our tens of thousands,
wheelchairs
before the firing squad,
Hiace vans
Before the gympies.
On hunger strike
Coup-de grace.
Waxed-pocked faces
In our boxes,
Stale hoards
Pounding mourner's skulls.
Hung drawn quartered
From Lough Roughan
to carrickfergus.
Shipped into slavery.
Lost in Barbados.

Four angels
statosphered hurl bolts at land
and sea
and trees.Revelations
Through bars.
Unmarked forehead
Aganist the bars

What is this piece of earth
to them
that we must jeopardise our souls.

■ **Tarlach Ó Conghalaigh,**
H-Blocks



groups, the possession of loyalist weapons and in some cases direct involvement in loyalist attacks upon nationalists. In addition to this thousands of British security force montages containing the personal details of nationalists, have found their way into loyalist hands. On an almost weekly basis nationalists are informed that their details have mysteriously fallen into the hands of loyalists with no explanation of how this has occurred, the extent of the information contained on these files or any offers of assistance or protection. This steady haemorrhaging of information goes unchecked and in some cases, such as Brian Nelson's, is actually encouraged by elements of MI5, British military intelligence and RUC Special Branch.

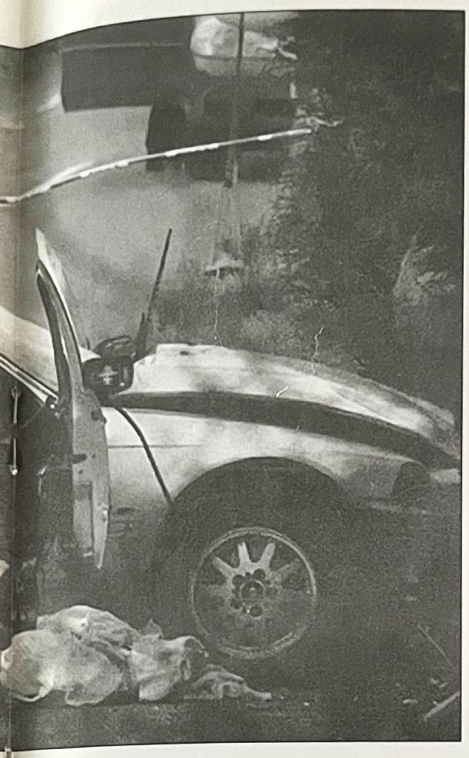
THE ROLE OF THE AGENT

Rather than controlling every one of these operations the British manipulate the flow of information by placing and recruiting key agents in loyalist groups. The role of these agents is to influence their thinking and to direct the targeting of troublesome individuals. Troublesome individuals such as Pat Finucane and Rosemary Nelson

In the period up to the mid-1970's, counter-insurgency tactics were often lacking in subtlety. Notable cases include that of the Littlejohn brothers, the MRF (Military Reaction Force) - an undercover project run by British military intelligence which involved the operation of massage parlours, a bogus laundry firm, as well as the setting up, funding and supplying of gangs of renegade republicans and criminals. Similarly the 'Boys Own' exploits of undercover Captain Robert Nairac, made the involvement of the British more easily traceable.

Embarrassing and politically damaging exposure of their activities, led the British intelligence services to adopt a more distanced approach, keeping their own role more circumspect and their agents more tightly controlled. Despite this refinement, however, the manipulation of loyalists was blown wide open with the arrest of Brian Nelson and the exposure of his activities on behalf of British military intelligence. In more recent times evidence and suspicions connected to events such as the Dublin and Monaghan bombings and the attack on Donnelly's bar, Silverbridge are re-emerging to haunt British Intelligence Services.

Nelson's trial and the revelations contained in his own diary showed that military intelligence, through Nelson, helped rearm the loyalist murder squads in 1988. Arms landed in county Down from South Africa significantly increased the killing capacity of these squads This was borne out by attacks such as these on the Ormeau Road and Oldpark





● There is quite obviously a considerable level of direct collusion between locally recruited members of the RUC, RIR and loyalist paramilitaries as can be seen in the murders of Human Rights solicitors Pat Finucane (pictured above with U.S. Congressman Peter King) and Rosemary Nelson, the picture top left shows her bombed out car

Bookies in Belfast and the Shields and Fox families in County Tyrone. There was a wave of attacks against Catholic workmen across the six counties and the homes of many more nationalists and republicans came under gun and grenade attack, resulting in death and injury to men, women and children

Nelson was the UDA's main intelligence officer and by feeding him information from security files, military intelligence was able to direct and from a distance control, the operation of loyalist murder squads. Proof that Nelson's activities and those of his handlers were sanctioned at the highest political level, came when Tom King, British Minister of Defence at the time of Nelson's involvement in the murders, wrote to the trial judge commending his role. Nelson was lauded for saving countless lives and allowing his handlers to frustrate the murderous intent of the UDA. Of course we now know that in the case of Pat Finucane, Nelson's handlers were aware that an attack was imminent upon him but for their own reasons chose not to alert or warn him.

TARGETING - GUILT BY ASSOCIATION

The current loyalist campaign may appear random as in the 1970's; the nationalist who happens to be in the wrong place at the wrong time often becomes the victim. While it is sometimes the case that any taig will do, it is also worth examining the circumstances of many of these attacks. Taxi drivers, doormen in clubs and pubs, GAA officials, cross community workers and ex-prisoners, have all been the targets of regular attacks by loyalists. In many cases only the most tenuous of connections to the republican movement have been enough to draw the fire of loyalist killers. Perhaps a republican activist has simply been stopped at an RUC or military check-point in a particular taxi, or has been known to frequent a particular bar. Perhaps the person is related to, or is a family friend of a republican. These apparently innocuous details are regularly logged by RUC and RIR patrols and are passed on to loyalists with deadly consequences Recent admissions by loyalists during the course of a television documentary regarding the volume of information being passed to them came as no surprise to nationalists and republicans.

REFINEMENT OF POLICY

Britain's primary political objective has not changed in three decades; it remains the defeat of republican resistance to its rule in Ireland. Counter-insurgency strategy has been shaped by a



● **FRANK KITSON — his theories are now the core of British counter-insurgency strategy**

number of political and military developments, not least the rearming of the IRA in the 1980's. But perhaps the factor that most influenced this strategy was the electoral rise of Sinn Fein in the early 1980's.

Until recently every political initiative launched since then has had the primary aim of marginalising Sinn Fein and demonising its activists. Attacks on the party and on outspoken nationalists were and are, linked to Britain's overall objective of silencing the republican voice and confining political debate on the north to a British agenda. While we may have cause to be hopeful that this may in fact be changing under Tony Blair and Mo Mowlam's leadership, we can be in no doubt that the British military and intelligence establishment, the securocrats, are as determined as ever to pursue this objective

They are also equally determined that the full extent of this collusion should never be uncovered, and only recently figures such as Jack Hermon, Ken Maginnis and Martin Smyth have begun the fight back on their behalf; More than a quarter of a century after they were first mooted by Frank Kitson, his theories are now the core of British counter-insurgency strategy. The history of Britain's involvement in Ireland demonstrates that there are no lengths to which its forces will not go in order to defeat the republican struggle, and to hide the shameful reality of its dirty war.

■ **JIM McVEIGH , H BLOCKS**

AG CUIMHNEAMH ROSEMARY

Níl a fhios againn an fáth cruinn ar cuireadh Rosemary Nelson chun bhás ar shráideanna Lorgáin mí Márta 16ú 1999; nó cé rinne é. Ag am na scríbhneoireachta tá sé trí mhí ón ruathar brúidiúl siúd ar bhean a chaith a saol ag obair ar son a pobal féin, ar son duine gan cumhacht gan gúth; daoine mar an gnáthphobal Bhóthar Garvaghy, nó ar son teaghlach Robert Hamill a fuair bás faoi dhearcadh an RUC agus bróga na bhfear buí i bPort an Dunainn. Pé duine a chuir Rosemary chun bháis baineadh úsáid as buama níos sofaisticiúla ná chonacthas i lámh dílseora ar feadh na mblianta. Cluinimid go raibh 'Powergel i gcéist - ábhar pleascáin ar dóigh atá ag na dilseoirí. Ansin déirtear nár 'Powergel' é, ach C4, nó ábhar eile nach bhfuil le fáil ach ag seirbhísí faisnéise na Sasana. Ag deireadh an lae is cuma. Is dhá thaobh den aghaidh chéanna iad beirt, gan fhios ag taobh amháin acu an craic.



Cuireadh alt scríofa ag Rosemary i gcló san 'Irish News' ar an mhaidin i ndiaidh a báis. Bhí sí i dteagmhail le hImmram Khan, an dlíodóir i mbun fheachtais Steven Lawrence i Londain. Bhí sí ag déanamh ceangailt idir an dá chas. Scríobh sí narbh é seicteachas a bhí i gceist i bPort an Dunainn ach ciníochas. Chonaic muid uilig é scríofa ar na ballaí - KAI, (Kill All Irish). Is ionann Éireannach agus Caitliceach leis na daoine seo, smaointí a tháinig anall as an Bhreatain céad nó dhá chéad bliain ó shin, iarsmaí naisiúnachais Bhriotanaigh ón ré sin sa Bhreatain féin. Ar ndóigh, tá an ceangailt idir Éireanneachas agus Caitliceachas marbh san aois seo, agus i measc poblachtanaigh ó am Wolfe Tone ní glactar gurbh ionann an dhá coinciap. Tá an ord oraisteach 's a leithéid gafa i 'time warp,' éigin. Ach tá siad de dhíth ag Arm Sasana - mar leithscéal bheith in Éirinn.

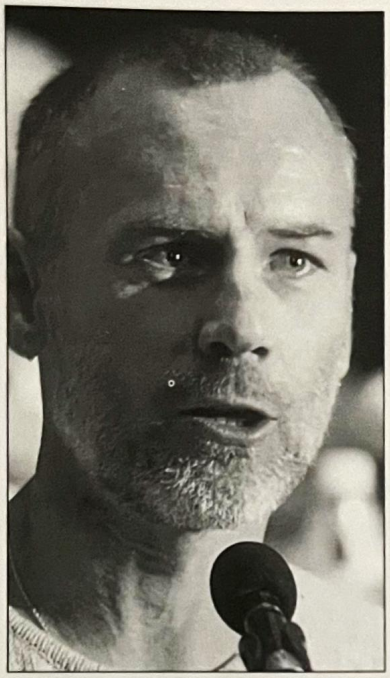
Braitheann Rialtas Shasana ar an mhearú súl gur cogadh seicteach é seo, go bhfuil Caitlicigh agus Protastunaigh ag tróid cogaidh creidimh mar a bhí san Eoraip dhá chéad bliain ó shin, agus go bhfuil arm Sasana anseo ag coinneall 'na hÉireannaigh mire' as a chéile. Is cine foréigneach agus neamhhintleachtach na hÉireannaigh. Ní cumhacht coilíneach atá á imirt ag na Sasanaigh, ach nós an dea-chomharsan ag déanamh a ndualgas. Is é seo ciníochas. Is idé-eolaiocht clasaiceach an choilíneachais é 'the dark heart of Africa' in Éirinn sa fichiú haois. Cumhacht impiriúil ag cur sibhialtacht orainn. Fhád is atá cuma ar an scéal gur comhrac é idir Caitlicigh agus Protastunaigh, tá an mearú súl slán. Nuair a tharla obraid mhileata den IRA in Éirinn, nó buama mór i Londain, duirt siad gur 'propaganda spectacular' é, nó níos simplí, go raibh na rudaí seo mar pháirt den 'incomprehensibilty of the Irish situation'.

Nuair atá na dilseoirí ag marú Caitliceach in Éirinn tá siad céad slán. Nuair nach bhfuil, ta cuidiú de dhith agus faiigheann siad é ó na seirbhisi faisnéise. Sna bliantaí '85, '86 agus '87, níor mharaigh na dilseoirí ach tríur duine. Caitliceach amhán ina measc. Bhí an mearú súl i dtrioblóid! Chuir Airm Sasana Brian Nelson isteach san UDA i ró1 intleachtach. D'obair siad leis le gunnaí, gránáidí agus abhar pléasáin a fháil do na dilseoirí ón Afraic Theas. Níl fianaise le fáil ach ar an duine amháin seo ach taispeánann sé go raibh British intelligence i mbun, lár agus fréagrach as eagrú agus armáil na ndilseoirí sa ré sin,mar a bhí ag tús na seachtóidí 1eis an MRF. Is ionann sin is gur craobh neamh-oifigiúil Arm Sasana na heagraíochtaí dilseoirí. Agus tá siad neamh-oifigiúil mar tá ar na Sasanaigh bheith abálta iad a cháineadh. Chuir na Francaigh 'Pseudo Gangs' ar a leithéid sa chogadh san Algéir. Bhain siadsan úsáid as grúpaí Francach bochta ina gconaí san Algéir le gníomhartha salacha a dhéanamh ar a son. Bíonn fadhbanna agus eagla ar na grúpaí siúd roimh athrú ar bith sa réim; ach baintear úsáid as an fhaitíos seo ag na cumhachtaí choilíneacha, agus tá siad sásta úsáid le poblachtanaigh agus a leithéid de Rosemary a mharú nach feidir leis an arm oifigiúil a mharú nuair atá siad ag rá nach cogadh é. Déanann na dilseoirí na gníomhartha salacha agus tig leis na Sasanaigh iad a cháineadh agus a chuir i bpriosún leis an mearú súl a choinneail beo go bhfuil siad ag déanamh an déa-chomharsanúlacht.

Is é sin an fáth ar maraíodh Rosemary Nelson, an fáth ar baineadh úsáid as buama níos sofaisticiúla nach bhfaca muid i lámh dilseora ar feadh na mblianta. Bhí ar na seirbhísí faisnéise bheith cinnte nach mbeadh an teachtaireacht seo á thabhairt don gnáthphobal i Sasana - go bhfuil Rialtas Sasana ceangailte sa chogadh coilíneach deireanach. Maraíodh Rosemary mar bhí sí contúirteach daoibhse leis an mhéid sin measa a bhí aici mar dlíodóir ar fud an domhain, i dteagmhail leis na Poncánaigh agus eagraíochtaí dlí i Sasana agus ar fud an domhain. Ach an fáth is tabhachtaí, bhí sí contúirteach daoibhse mar gheall is gur bhean chróga í, gan eagla uirthi an fhírinne a rá.

Tarlach Ó Conghlaigh, Gaeltacht na Fuiseoige, H Bloic.

UNITY OF



● **PADRAIC WILSON**

IN EARLY NOVEMBER 1976 I read an article in a local republican newsletter, *The Volunteer*, about a fellow republican, Ned Flynn, who had recently been sentenced to 3 years imprisonment. The article was highlighting the plight of Ned and a small number of other republican prisoners who were on protest in the H Blocks of Long Kesh. They were refusing to wear prison uniforms or to do prison work in protest against attempts to criminalise them. As a consequence they were locked in prison cells 24 hours a day naked except for a blanket. Stories were beginning to emerge about ill treatment at the hands of screws and other members of prison staff

This was the beginning of a prison protest that would grow to include hundreds of republican prisoners in the H Blocks, Armagh Women's Prison and Crumlin Road Prison. It would motivate tens of thousands of people across Ireland. It would focus attention on the conflict in the North of Ireland like never before. Ultimately it would shatter the layers of misinformation that successive British governments had attempted to plaster over the true nature of their role in Irish affairs. But all of that lay ahead.

For me at that precise period it was very difficult to get a sense of what type of conditions these republican prisoners were enduring. I did not understand the long-term ramifications for the wider struggle. Through conversations with my father and discussions with other republicans at that time I had become aware of the history of prison struggles and of the different campaigns by republicans against attempts to criminalise them and their struggle. I had no experience of the reality of prison. I had no understanding of the strategies and tactics that prison struggle required.

I had left school 5 months previously. My experience of life was very limited and restricted mainly to the close confines of nationalist areas of Belfast However, having been raised in a republican family I was fortunate in that the politics of the conflict were a constant feature of discussions and conversations within our home. The fact that one of my brothers had been for a period associated with the Republican Clubs (later the Workers Party) gave an added spice to issues of the day. Another brother had been imprisoned as a republican prisoner in the Cages of Long Kesh. All of these factors were to have a positive effect on me and I would find strength in what I had been taught and in what I had learnt far sooner than I ever expected.

By the end of November 1976 I was myself a republican prisoner, on remand, in Crumlin Road prison. The battle to try and criminalise republican prisoners and the entire republican struggle was gathering momentum inside and outside of prison walls. Awareness and resistance were beginning to grow. A process of restructuring and a reassessment of tactics and strategy were underway within republican ranks. My education was taking off on a whole new plane.

The period from 1976 to 1981, covering the blanket protest and the hunger strikes, has been well documented in the intervening years. Books such as *'Nor Meekly Serve My Time'* and *'Ten Men Dead'* are among the best histories and chronicles of those events.

While those 5 years are unique and unparalleled in prison terms, the prison struggles did not end with the conclusion of the hunger strike in October 1981. In many respects that was only the beginning of a new and equally determined phase of prison struggle. "The epitome of our active struggle is expressed in the hunger strike itself and the deaths of our ten comrades The trauma of their deaths marked us all and in the aftermath we were also marked with a determination to struggle on in different forms to achieve what they had died for. There was no sense of defeat after October 3, 1981. In terms of the internal prison struggle the ten deaths were proof of our determination to win what was rightfully ours. While there was no sense of defeat the fact remained that apart from the right to wear our own clothes, we had not won our demands. Having used what appeared to be our ultimate weapon we still faced the question of how to achieve practical improvements in our conditions which reflected what we had proved in principle - that is, that we were political prisoners." (GAOL HISTORY, REPUBLICAN POW's)

When I was released from the H blocks in 1982 the debate about how exactly we would proceed was still taking place. It was nearing conclusion. There were a number of views being presented and argued for, each with equal determination and conviction. It came down to a choice between three options. Some felt that we had achieved all that we could expect to and should now make the best of what was available. Others were adamant that it was only right, given the nature of the sacrifices of the hunger strikers, to remain on protest, as a living testament to the determination and dedication of republican prisoners. There were those who understood the feelings and motivations behind both of these views but who felt that a third option existed. They recognised the need to break out of the isolation of the past 5 years. By their very nature the blanket and no wash protests had necessitated us enduring lock-ups and confinement, separate from the rest of the prison system. The time had come to change all of that. The prison struggle was not over; in fact in ways it was only beginning.

The nature and scope of the struggle on the outside was changing rapidly. Within the prison changes were needed if we were to advance. At the end of the hunger strike in 1981 we had stated that we remained committed to achieving our objectives "by whatever means we believe necessary and expedient. We rule nothing out" It was decision time again.

The decision was taken that republican prisoners would call an end to their protest and begin to move into the

PURPOSE

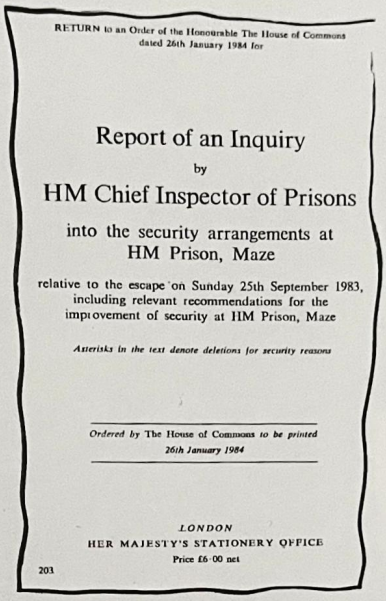
system. This was done in a very structured and organised manner During the years of the blanket and hunger strikes loyalists and others had dominated the 'conforming wings' in the rest of the H Blocks. Over coming months all of that was set to change.

That was the juncture at which republican prisoners found themselves when I was released in 1982. Even though I maintained contact with a number of comrades following my release and visited them on occasion my images and experiences of the H Blocks were always recalled according to how things were when I left It was difficult to picture the changes that were taking place.

The escape of 38 republican PoW's in September 1983 was a massive blow to both the political and prison systems. It was the response of republican prisoners to everything that they had endured over previous years. That carefully planned and executed operation destroyed the notion that republican resistance had been subdued and rendered ineffective. The very system that had believed it had conquered republicans was itself pulled inside out .The impact of this operation on morale and on the wider struggle was significant. It, predictably, drew a swift and brutal response from the system. This in turn saw the creation of a new set of circumstances that would necessitate a reappraisal of prison strategy and tactics. This was a challenge which republican prisoners rose to meet head on.

While unity of purpose and a spirit of resistance have been essential for republican POW's that does not mean that at every stage there has been absolute harmony among POW's on every issue. In fact over the years there have been some serious differences on how best to proceed. Some of this was rooted in genuinely held opinions and analyses. At other times the motivation was not always as clear or honest.

Imprisonment brings with it a range of difficulties. There is the obvious loss of freedom. Confinement in proximity to others can be almost unbearable for some. There can be feelings of guilt and regret. Feelings of insecurity about relationships often take hold. Paranoia can develop. Intolerance and the inability or refusal to change and adapt can lead to tension and conflict. For political prisoners there is of course the question



RETURN to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons dated 26th January 1984 for

Report of an Inquiry

by

HM Chief Inspector of Prisons

into the security arrangements at HM Prison, Maze

relative to the escape on Sunday 25th September 1983, including relevant recommendations for the improvement of security at HM Prison, Maze

Asterisks in the text denote deletions for security reasons

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● The escape of 38 republican PoW's in September 1983 was a massive blow to both the political and prison systems

of politics. The strongest of people have at times not been able to cope with the combined impact of all of this and have collapsed under the burden. People often frowned upon as being weak, for whatever reason, have often proven themselves the most capable in such circumstances. There is of course no golden rule for any of this and people can change depending on the circumstances and their own frame of mind.

At the other end of the scale there are those who see imprisonment as another challenge. To them it is another aspect of struggle. They frequently find themselves taking on responsibility for the welfare of others. At times decisions need to be taken which will rest heavily on those concerned. To balance the needs and interests of everyone in such situations is not always possible and if not handled properly does lead to tensions. In such circumstances people develop skills and talents they never believed themselves capable of.

To create conditions within which this diversity can be accommodated and still maintain structures capable of effecting change and securing political objectives has in itself been a major achievement. This is especially so when you consider that the whole notion of prison in the first place is to isolate the individual, prevent any organisation around common issues and actively use the denial of basic amenities and facilities as punishment for the most trivial of incidents. It is in this context that the unity of purpose and the spirit of resistance that have been the hallmark of republican POW's are best exhibited.

I found myself back on remand in Crumlin Road in 1991. I returned to the H Blocks again as a sentenced prisoner in 1993. Only then did I begin to get a real sense of the extent of the successes that been achieved by republican POW's in the years since the blanket protest and hunger strikes. In essence all of the basic demands we had sought through the blanket and hunger strikes had been secured.

Once I had settled back into the place the process of learning began again. Many of the men I had left behind in 1982 were still here so in some respects things were made a bit easier. We shared common experiences. We knew where we had started from and were able to appreciate the significance of what had been accomplished. This was not the case for everyone and some POW's with no previous history of the place tended to take some things for granted. There were other tensions simmering which I sensed but did not immediately identify.

The population of the H Blocks was changing. Many of the long term POW's who had been in since the 1970's began to gain their freedom. Another generation was beginning to fill the wings. Among them were men from the blanket days and other comrades who had been imprisoned on previous occasions. There was a clash of views and opinions on a range of issues. Some comrades argued that those who had been inside since the 1970's were out of touch with internal developments, structures, equipment, tactics, operational difficulties and politics. Coupled with some of the issues touched upon earlier these arguments were sometimes used to mask real feelings and views. Tensions and frustrations were developing.

The priority for those tasked with securing and defending republican interests and needs was not to allow any of this to divert focus away from the actual enemy. The danger of turning in on ourselves was real. To allow that to happen would be to abandon everything we had fought and sacrificed for. There was no way that we could allow that to take place.



● The combined effect of the tunnel operation and the response to it was to solidify republican unity and strengthen the spirit of resistance

We still had many outstanding demands that we had been pursuing though a series of conditions campaigns initiated in the late 1980's. There was a certain irony in the fact that the more we won in terms of improved conditions the more danger there was of POW's turning inward.

This was to be as big a task as any other that we had faced in the past what guided us were the republican needs and interests. We had to expose the excuses and re-focus everyone on the priorities. The announcement of the first cessation of military operations by Óglaigh Na hÉireann in 1994 was a time of confusion and uncertainty. Many people got caught up in the hype at the initial stages and thought that things would move quickly.

By the time that we had entered into the second cessation in 1997 there was a far different feeling in place on the wings and blocks. People's feet were more firmly rooted to the ground. To the surprise of many of the people who have ever been held here, including most still here at the time and to the sheer dismay of the enemy, republican POW's dug a tunnel from H7. The response from the system showed that in many respects they had learnt little over the years. For the first time in a considerable number of years they dispatched riot teams down onto the republican wings in the H Blocks. The actual enemy was in clear focus as once again narrow sectarian agendas were allowed to dictate the pace. The combined effect of the tunnel operation and the response to it was to solidify republican unity and strengthen the spirit of resistance. Regardless of petty differences, which always exist, the main focus was once again on the real priorities. This was reinforced again at the end of 1997 when Liam Averil's escape was successfully organised.

We have learnt many lessons throughout the course of various prison struggles. No two situations are the same. What worked for us in the H Blocks could not be automatically transferred to other situations. Our women comrades in Maghaberry faced different conditions and obstacles. They had to confront and overcome these in different ways. Those comrades held in Portlaoise had to approach their campaigns and requirements in ways suited to them. Most difficult of all were undoubtedly the situations faced by our comrades who were held in prisons in England. In each of these environments a unity of purpose has been the mainstay that has enabled the spirit of resistance to survive.

Today less than 70 republican prisoners are held on the wings of the H Blocks. The idea of trying to deny that we are anything other than political prisoners has long been abandoned. Our structures are fully recognised and our representatives meet with the prison management to discuss all matters relevant to our needs and lives as political prisoners.

We have met with a wide range of political and religious representatives from Ireland, Britain, Europe and America. We have hosted republican delegations to discuss the progress, or lack of the same, throughout the course of the peace process. Included in one such delegation were representatives of the South African government and the ANC. Also present on that historic occasion were all of our women comrades who were at that time held in Maghaberry prison.

We have journeyed a long way from the bleak period of 1976. I am currently held on B Wing H5. When I first joined the blanket protest in 1977 I was held on B wing H5. At that time there were almost 90 republican prisoners held on A and B wings in this Block alone. If the current situation prevails then I will most likely end this period as a republican POW in Long Kesh on the same wing on which it began over 20 years ago.

On the back wall of our wing canteen is a mural dedicated to the memory of 18 republican POW's who died while imprisoned in Long Kesh. The last name is that of Pól Kinsella who died in December 1994. Their lives and those of all of our dead comrades are no less precious to their families and to us their friends and comrades than those of the thousands of others, who have died as a consequence of this struggle are to their families and friends.

Regardless of what the months ahead may bring, the same unity of purpose and spirit of resistance that have brought us thus far in our prison struggle will continue to strengthen and guide us.

■ **PADRAIC WILSON, H BLOCKS.**

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

— Coiste Residential in South Armagh



● Participants at the Coiste na n-Iarchimí gathering at Mullaghbawn in South Armagh

ON 30th JUNE - 1 July 1999 Coiste na n-Iarchimí held a very successful residential in Tí Chulainn, Mulaghbawn in South Armagh. Present at the residential were representatives from the 22 groups throughout Ireland currently affiliated to the Coiste. Gerry Hanratty (O\C) and Donald Gannon from Portlaoise were also in attendance, Padraic Wilson (O\C) and Joe Brennan from Long Kesh had requested parole to attend but the NIO refused permission. In all, over 30 people participated in the residential facilitated by Joanna McMinn, who, has a long history of working with republican prisoners in all of the prisons in Ireland.

The main purpose of the residential was to assess the work of the Coiste since was established in November 1998 and plan for the years ahead. The over-ling theme was: Where do we want to in 3-5 years time? and, What do we have to do to get there?

Raymond McCartney, the chairperson of Coiste, opened the proceedings. There followed a review of the work carried out by the Coiste to date presented by Mike Ritchie, the project manager. Laurence McKeown, the Coiste development worker, then placed the work of the Coiste in the broader political arena drawing similarities between the work conducted by the Coiste and the struggle waged within the prisons against criminalisation. Both Mike and Laurence agreed that much had been achieved in the short time since they took up their posts but that much still remained to be done if the Coiste was to be as inclusive as possible of the entire republican ex-prisoner community.

Although Mike and Lawrence offered a critical assessment of the Coiste's work to date they also highlighted significant achievements. Currently a Coiste office with three workers is being established in Dublin that will service the 26 counties. This will allow the Coiste to broaden its scope and establish itself in the south of the country, especially in counties where small pockets of republican ex-prisoners exist isolated from the broader ex-prisoner community. This new development adds to the groups which already exist in the south of the country but which are confined to the border counties of Louth, Monaghan and Donegal. In the north all counties currently have a Coiste group though development is still patchy with areas such as Derry, North Antrim, South Down and Armagh city still not catered for.

Just some examples of the work Mike and Laurence have already carried out were given in Mike's presentation. These included meetings with the Prisons

Department at the NIO, meetings with representatives of the Dublin Foreign Affairs Department, the Department of Justice, the Office of the Taoiseach, and the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs. A detailed submission has been made to the Human Rights Commission in the north highlighting instances of discrimination and injustice against former republican prisoners and one also to the Bloomfield Commission on the Review of Criminal Injuries Compensation Legislation. The Coiste has secured funding for the creation of an economic development unit that will look at issues of economic sustainability for the organisation and its affiliated groups and is also now establishing a counselling service in north Belfast. This will complement the excellent work already carried out in this important field by Tar Anall, the first of the republican ex-prisoner self-help groups to be established in 1995. A programme of political education and consciousness raising will shortly begin which will draw heavily on the core principles underlying the informal educational systems created within the prisons. These are but some of the developments that the Coiste has already initiated.

Mike and Laurence haven't been content either with restricting their work to the practical issues of establishing an effective, efficient organisational structure for ex-prisoner groups. A priority for them has been the dissemination of information and the promotion of the Coiste as the body representing the republican ex-prisoner community. An example of this was demonstrated by the fact that much of the proceedings at the residential, including interviews with several of the participants, were recorded on film. The Coiste has employed the services of 'Northern Visions', an independent film company based in Belfast, to produce a promotional video for the Coiste. In addition to that the Coiste's own website containing all of its publications, reports and submissions will soon be in operation. Not only will this make the work of the Coiste available to a much wider audience but will also provide for internal communications system between all the affiliated groups via e-mail. The website has been specifically designed for the Coiste by a group of ex-prisoners who recently formed their own company. A bi-monthly bulletin will soon be available also. All in all, in a short period of time the Coiste has already firmly established itself in the eyes of the republican ex-prisoner community, government and statutory bodies, voluntary and community organisations and the media.

In Laurence's address to the participants he said that whilst it was crucial that the Coiste build an effective, efficient organisation to work on behalf of all republican ex-prisoners it was important to keep in mind at all times that they were not just providing a service to people. They were engaged in a struggle, a struggle that goes back to the attempts to criminalise republican prisoners. Despite that battle having been won in the prisons and regardless of the fact that prisoners were being released early as part of a political process, there nevertheless remained legislation that placed political ex-prisoners in the same category as ordinary offenders. There were also on going attempts by various sections of the media and establishment to lay the entire blame for the conflict on republican prisoners. For that reason, Laurence said, the Coiste should be very clear about the political campaigning and lobbying role it must play if it is to seriously combat these agendas and to achieve the radical change in legislation necessary.

Apart from the external dimensions of the Coiste's role, Laurence said it was crucial that republican ex-prisoners continue the process of consciousness raising and politicisation that was so much a part of life within the prisons. He included within this the cultural, artistic and creative initiatives that prisoners had been involved in, including the establishment of *An Glór Gafa*. Laurence went on to announce that the Coiste hope to begin such an educational programme later in the year and that part of such a programme would be to engage in discussion with those outside of the republican ex-prisoner community. These would include representatives from loyalist groups and from the various 'victims' organisations as well as the media and others. In doing so, Laurence added, republican ex-prisoners would be taking the initiative in challenging perceptions and particular political agendas.

Following the opening session, the laying down of ground rules and the noting of the participants' expectations the residential then got down to two days of intensive work, most of it carried out in smaller group-workshops. The outcome of those discussions is currently being compiled and will be written up in an extensive report that will provide the Coiste with its next '1 year action plan' as well as providing direction for the Coiste's future development over a 3-5 year period. It was an exhausting two days for all involved but also an exhilarating one. Old friends met for the first time after many years. New friendships were formed and the bond of solidarity that was so much part of prison life was everywhere in evidence. It is the aim of the Coiste to foster that bond and in doing so to play as prominent a role in bringing about political change on the outside as prisoners achieved whilst on the inside.

We wish them well. Ádh mór oraibh uilig.

COMPASSIONATE LEAVE

■ CIARAN FERRY, H-BLOCKS

You denied them a chance to
Rebond; to re-enact the
Things they used to do.
Share the dreams that are

Shallow but uninterrupted.
The gift, not quantifiable like
Material goods; but an
Emotional journey.

A chance to retrace the
Steps that have lain
Untrodden for so long.
But you care not

You're only doing your job;
To the letter of the law.
How can you get involved with
Emotions.

Would it not be uncultured?
Something that goes against the
Grain of your very fibre. Be
Careful of weakening the system

A blow to our spirits can mean
Little to you.
Struggle, real struggle and
Hardship are foreign to you;

Just like you are to me;
Incomprehensible.
Alien to my thoughts.
Do you dream like I do?

That blow to the spirit will not
Break a heart; it will only
Decrease its life span

Spirits can never be defeated,
Only the brain can give in.

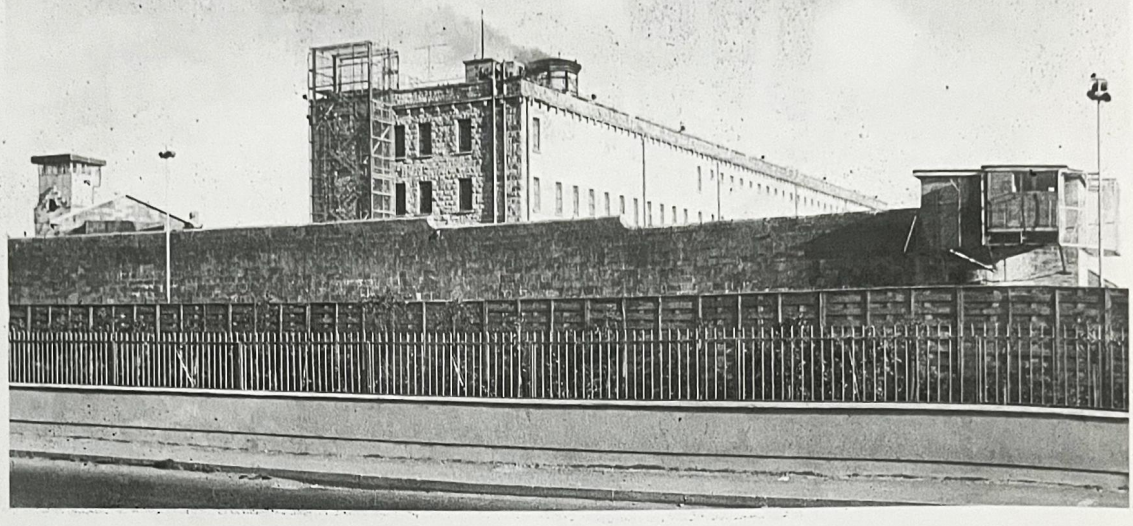
But there's something inside us
All that carries on resisting.



Name	Block	Sentence	Date (SRC*)	Date (long term)
Peter Lynch	H3A	24 Years	18/08/99	18/08/03
Oliver Masterson	H5C	24 Years	07/09/99	07/09/03
Michael Bennett	H5D	24 Years	08/08/99	08/09/03
Seamus Madden	H5A	27 Years	10/10/99	10/09/04
Kieran McCart	H5A	17 Years	12/10/99	12/09/02
Seán McGuigan	H5B	20 Years	10/11/99	10/07/03
Thomas Marron	H5D	16 Years	11/12/99	11/08/02
Joe Brennan	H5A	16 Years	11/12/99	11/08/02
Pádraic Wilson	H5B	24 Years	16/12/99	16/12/03
Damien McComb	H5D	30 Years	21/12/99	21/12/04
Seán Boyle	H3A	18 Years	11/02/00	11/02/03
Mickey Cambell	H3B	18 Years	11/02/00	11/02/03
Seamus McGarrigle	H5A	LIFE	21/02/00	NONE
Tony Taylor	H5D	18 Years	13/03/00	13/03/03
Damien Morgan	H5A	25 Years	19/03/00	19/03/04
Timmy Jack	H5C	20 Years	20/03/00	20/11/06
Michael Hillen	H3A	21 Years	22/03/00	01/06/10
Liam McNally	H5D	22 Years	21/07/00	21/03/04
Ciaran Ferry	H5D	22 Years	21/07/00	NONE
Harry McCartney	H5B	LIFE	24/07/00	18/08/03
Gareth Doris	H3A	10 Years	25/08/00	25/08/02
Paul McCullough	H5C	4.5 Years	28/08/00	28/08/00
Leo Cuningham	H5C	24 Years	20/08/00	20/08/04
Paddy Murray	H5B	23 Years	20/09/00	20/07/04
Cormac Conlon	H3B	14 Years	05/10/00	05/02/03
Mickey O'Hara	H3B	14 Years	05/10/00	05/02/03
Robbie Davidson	H5A	14 Years	09/10/00	09/02/03
Phil Manning	H3B	LIFE	22/11/00	NONE
Gerry Butler	H5B	LIFE	10/12/00	NONE
Hugh McKee	H5B	22 Years	21/02/01	21/10/04
Moel McHugh	H5D	LIFE	24/03/01	NONE
Ciaran Morrison	H5C	25 Years	29/05/01	28/09/05
Kevin McCann	H3B	25 Years	09/06/01	09/08/05
Brendan McAnoy	H5A	25 Years	10/06/01	10/10/05
Paddy Gallen	H5B	LIFE	21/06/01	NONE
Paul Stitt	H3A	22 Years	23/06/01	23/02/05
Jim McVeigh	H3B	24 Years	16/07/01	16/12/08
Tarlach Connolly	H5C	LIFE	24/07/01	NONE
Mickey O'Neill	H5A	16 Years	25/09/01	25/01/04
Eddie Grieve	H5B	16 Years	25/09/01	25/01/04
Finbar Grieve	H5D	16 Years	25/09/01	25/01/04
Terry Lavery	H5C	16 Years	20/10/01	20/02/04
Mark McDowell	H5A	16 Years	20/10/01	21/02/04
Seán McNulty	H5C	25 Years	23/10/01	23/06/06
Rory Dougan	H5C	LIFE	03/11/01	NONE
Rab Fryers	H3B	25 Years	12/11/01	12/06/06
Brian Arthurs	H3A	25 Years	16/11/01	16/01/06
Gerry Mackin	H5C	25 Years	15/02/02	15/03/06
Thomas McWilliams	H5A	LIFE	11/03/02	NONE
Ruairí Morgan	H5D	15 Years	13/03/02	13/03/04
Michael Duffy	H5A	LIFE	13/03/02	NONE
Jimmy Canning	H3B	30 Years	13/04/02	13/05/07
Davey Adams	H5C	25 Years	12/06/02	12/10/06
Féilim O hAdhmail	H5C	25 Years	28/06/02	28/09/06
Tony Doherty	H5C	LIFE	28/08/02	NONE
Raymond Wilkinson	H5B	18 Years	13/03/03	13/03/06
Noel McKay	H3A	LIFE	14/03/03	NONE
Robert Crawford	H5B	LIFE	08/04/03	NONE
Seamus McArdle	H3A	25 Years	10/04/03	10/04/14
Martin Corden	H5B	10 Years	24/04/03	24/04/03
Robert Duffy	H3B	LIFE	17/07/03	NONE
Martin Mines	H3A	20 Years	10/12/03	10/04/07
Tommy Fox	H3B	LIFE	19/02/04	NONE
Tommy Brogan	H3B	30 Years	16/03/04	16/11/14
Brian McHugh	H5D	25 Years	19/03/05	19/06/13
Micheál Caraher	H3A	25 Years	10/08/05	10/10/09
Seán Kelly	H5A	LIFE	18/11/05	NONE
Pat Martin	H5C	28 Years	18/11/05	18/03/09
Bernard McGinn	H3A	LIFE	12/12/08	NONE

*SRC = Sentence Review Commission

PORTLAOISE — What Needs To Be Done



PORTLAOISE POW's ask all political parties, groups and individuals to fully apply themselves to creating pressure on the Irish and British governments, relevant departments and committees for the full implementation of section 3 of the Good Friday Agreement (Prisoners section)

Both Governments will complete a review process within a fixed time-frame and set prospective release dates for all qualifying prisoners.

The release given to Portlaoise POW's by the prison administration fly in the face of the content and the spirit of the Good Friday Agreement. (section 3 on prisoners)

Until such times as Section 3 is fully implemented and all prisoners are released we ask that the Irish Government facilitate prisoners requirements as outlined in Section 5 of the Good Friday Agreement (prisoners section)

The governments continue to recognise the importance of measures to facilitate the reintegration of prisoners into the community by providing support both prior to and after release, including assistance directed towards availing of employment opportunities, re-training and or re-skilling, and further education.

The present position of all IRA POW's in Portlaoise is that any advances made to date have come via pressure from the Dublin POW Dept. and prisoners. (Driving lessons for car and HGV)

The government and its inter-departmental committee have to date acted only in a reactionary manner in relation to political commitments given in the Good Friday Agreement. In the words of the prison administration the Dept.. of Justice is using a Fire brigade approach to all issues of pre/post release.

In hard terms this lack of foresight manifests itself in the following:

- No pre-release programme/plan/blueprint.
- No post-release programme.
- No release dates set.
- No review of any sentence.

All points submitted by Portlaoise POW's were accepted by MENTOR in their study commissioned by ADM/CPA as rational and objective.

These include:

- Pre-release: Release programme
- Re training/re skilling
- Post Release: Accommodation.
- Unemployment benefit
- Self Employment
- Further Education
- Deletion of Prison Records

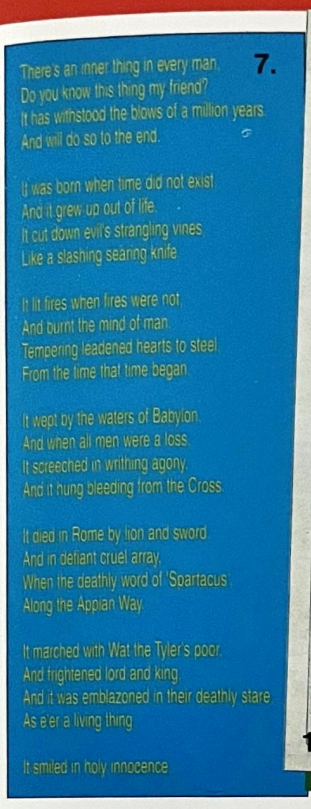
All pre-release the requirements which we have asked for are already on offer and operational within the Training Unit in Mountjoy for non-political prisoners.

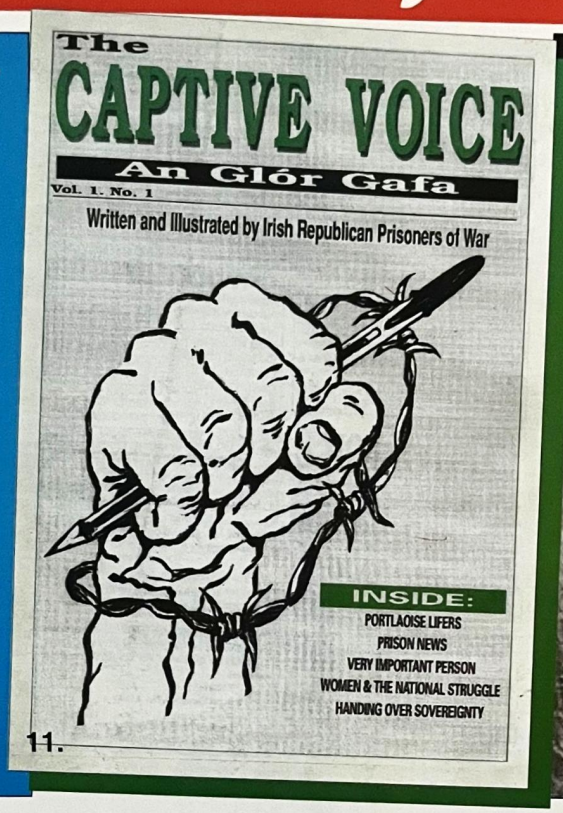
LIST OF RELEASE DATES
PORTLAOISE PRISON MAY 1999

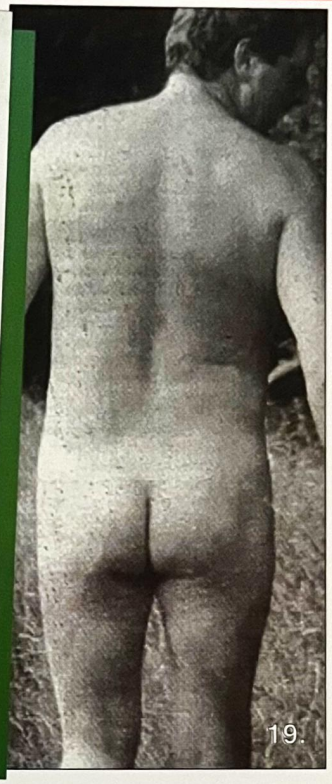
Name	Sentenced	Sentence	Release Date
Denis Kinsella	*3/12 97	25 years	25/05/11
Derek Doherty	*13/11/96	25 years	12/05/12
Donal Fennelly	26 cos.	6 years	No Date
Donal Gannon	*15/1/98	35 years	02/08/22
Francis Rafferty	*15/1/98	35 years	02/08/22
Gerard Hanratty	*15/1/98	35 years	02/08/22
James Murphy	*18/12/98	17 years	18/03/09
Jan Taylor	*18/12/98	30 years	10/12/14
Jeremiah Sheehy	26 cos.	12 years	04/02/08
John Crawley	*15/1/98	35 years	02/08/22
John Quinn	26 cos.	6 years	06/08/03
Kevin Walsh	26 cos.	14 years	05/08/09
Liam O Duibhir	*15/1/98	30 years	20/07/11
Michael Gallagher	*18/12/98	20 years	08/02/12
Michael O Neill	26 cos.	11 years	06/05/07
Pairic MacFhloinn	*13/11/96	35 years	06/08/19
Patrick Kelly	*18/12/98	20 years	21/06/11
Patrick Hayes	*3/12/98	30 years	27/01/15
Paul Magee	*5/5/98	Life	No Date
Pearse McCauley	26 cos.	14 years	05/08/09
Robert Morrow	*15/1/98	35 years	02/08/22

*REPATRIATED

An Glór Gafa Quiz







1. In what year was Sinn Féin Founded?

2. In what year did Gerry Adams first win the West Belfast seat for Sinn Féin?

3. Who was the first woman elected to the Westminster Parliament?

4. In what year was the G.A.A. founded?

5. Who was the first leader of the SDLP?

6. Who said "We serve neither King nor Kaiser, but Ireland"?

7. Cé scríobh an dan *"The Rhythm of Time"*?

8. Roger Casement was knighted by the British establishment for his humanitarian work in which country?

9. Casement was the last of the 1916 leaders to be executed, where did his execution take place.

10. In What year was Shergar "kidnapped"?

11. When did the first edition of *"An Glór Gafa"* appear?

12. Who was the O/C of Republican POW's prior to the first hunger strike in 1980?

13. In what year did RTE begin broadcasting?

14. In what year was Section 31, the broadcasting ban, lifted in the 26 counties?

15. Cad é tharla san Ceis Fhada Mí Meán Fómhair 1983?

16. Cad é an tainm a bhí ar an cime a d'ealaigh ona H Bloic Mí Na Nollag 1997?

17. In what year did the IRA visit the Grand Hotel in Brighton?

18. Who was the last female Republican POW to be released from Maghaberry in December 1998?

19. Which prominent DUP figure bared his bottom line, literally, in France?

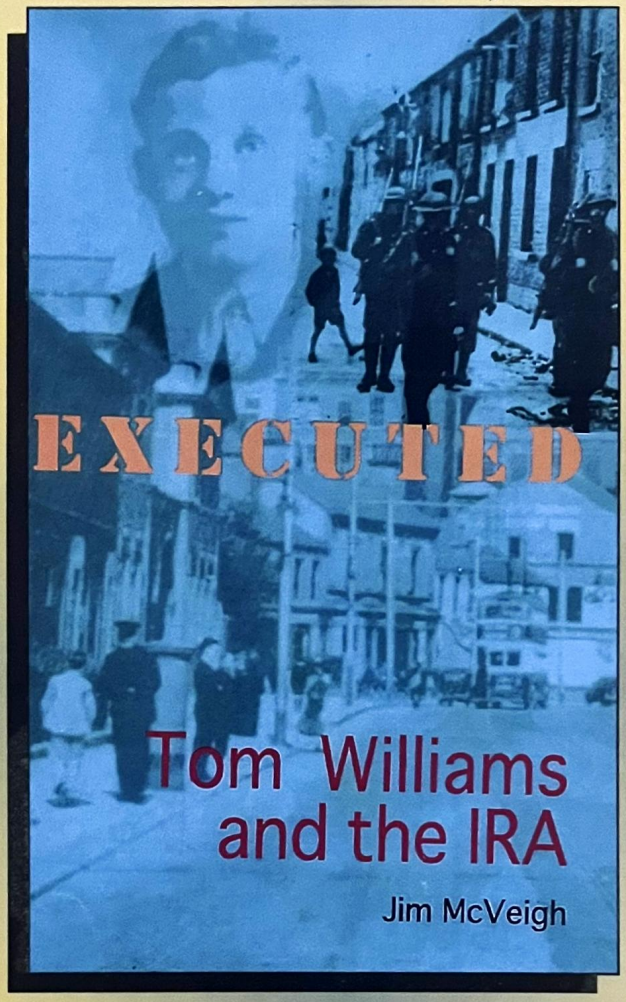
20. Which prominent member of Sinn Féin needed a crutch to lean on during some of the delicate negotiations at Stormont?

Prize, a book and this edition of *"An Glór Gafa"* signed by Remaining POW's in H Blocks for the first three correct sets of answers drawn from the hat.

Send Entries to: Paddy O'Dowd, COITSE, Unite E2, Woodville Street, Lurgan, Co Armagh, BT67 9AD.

Closing date for Entries August 28th 1999. Results published in *An Phoblacht/Republican News*.

beyond the pale publications



By Jim McVeigh.
Foreword by leading Irish Republican Joe Cahill

This book tells the story of Tom Williams who was one of six IRA volunteers sentenced to death by hanging in 1942. A group of eight, including two women, had mounted a diversionary operation to take attention away from three Republican parades held in Belfast to celebrate the 1916 Easter Rising. All such parades had been banned under the Stormount regime since the partition of Ireland and the introduction of the Civil Authorities (Special Powers) Act of 1922. A police patrol managed to capture the group but not before an exchange of shots which resulted in the death of RUC constable Patrick Murphy. Although only 18 years old, Tom Williams was in charge of the unit and in a controversial statement to the police he assumed full responsibility for the shooting.

Following a remarkable international reprieve campaign, the colonial Governor of Northern Ireland commuted five of the six death sentences to terms of penal servitude. But the British had decided that Tom Williams should hang.

Although Tom Williams is remembered in song, an exhibition, and a recent play, his story has never before appeared in print. Jim Mcveigh, himself a Republican prisoner, has pieced together a revealing account of the fateful operation and its aftermath. He has been ably assisted by leading Republican Joe Cahill, one of those sentenced to death with Tom Williams.

120pp. 129 x 198mm + 16 pages of original b&w photos ISBN 1-900960-05-2

Official launch Felons Club 6th August. Prisoners Day

BEYOND THE PALE PUBLICATIONS, UNIT 2.1.2 CONWAY MILL, 5-7 CONWAY STREET, BELFAST BTL3 TEL: 438630 FAX: 439707