



# One Hundred Days of Protest for Human Rights

- Vigil -

Dún Laoghaire Town Centre,  
Saturday October 28th,  
from 1pm to 4pm

**M**ick O'Brien, the Dún Laoghaire Republican, serving an eighteen year sentence in an English jail, will have spent **100 days on 'dirty' protest on October 30**. He is protesting over the severe and draconian prison conditions which he and other Republican prisoners have been subjected to since the IRA's cessation of military activities 14 months ago. Prior to beginning his protest **Mick was the victim of a brutal assault by up to eight prison guards** as he returned from a closed legal visit with his solicitor Gareth Pierce.

Mick O'Brien joined two other Republicans, Felim O'hAdhmaill from Belfast and Paddy Kelly from Laois on protest over conditions in Whitemoor Prison in England on July 22 last. Felim O'hAdhmaill was subsequently transferred back to a prison in the north which ended his protest. Mick O'Brien and Paddy Kelly continued with their protest calling for an end to their detention in the notorious Special Secure Units, the operation of closed visits, the restriction of education and exercise and communication.

In the early stages of the protest **concern grew for the wellbeing of Paddy Kelly as he was diagnosed with having a life-threatening cancerous growth on his back**. Repeated calls were made on behalf of Paddy by family, friends, medical personnel and the Dublin government to the Prison Authorities, the British Home Office and the British government to allow him to have his urgent medical treatment facilitated immediately. The British government delayed and stalled for months causing considerable anxiety and worry to Paddy and his family.

# ONE HUNDRED DAYS OF PROTEST

**P**addy Kelly was eventually moved from Whitemoor Prison on August 9 and brought to Peterborough Hospital for surgery. While there he was **chained to a prison guard at all times**, even during bathing and while having his bandages changed.

Meanwhile Mick O'Brien continued with the protest. In a letter sent from the prison he said, "It is now over a year since the IRA declared a unilateral cessation of military activity. Instead of seeing movement forward [from the British] in the conditions in which we are held and on the transfer issue we are witnessing quite the opposite. **None of the Republican prisoners here have seen any of their children since last year**".

Following his surgery, Paddy Kelly was quickly returned to Whitemoor Prison and in turn returned to the Special Secure Unit in late September to continue his sentence. On Sunday October 1 he rejoined Mick O'Brien on protest as the conditions under which he was being detained had not improved although he was still recovering from major surgery.

Politicians from all the main political parties in the 26 Counties have continued to express grave concern at the treatment of Irish political prisoners in English jails. Representatives from Fianna Fail, Labour and Fine Gael have visited Irish prisoners throughout England including Mick O'Brien and Paddy Kelly. In a detailed report of the Fine Gael delegations visit to the prisoners from September 11-13 it said of Mick O'Brien, "**He was strip searched before and after he met with the delegation**. The delegation were given a high security search on entering the prison with photograph and hand identification taken. Michael O'Brien is on protest because the conditions imposed mean that his children could not possibly visit him under present circumstances. **He spends 23 hours in his cell**, has no access to the telephone except to contact his solicitor. He has not seen further than 120 feet in three years. He never sees more than five people at any one time and he is not allowed any books".

Quite clearly the British government have adopted an extremely hostile and vindictive policy towards Irish political prisoners. This is a situation which must not be allowed to continue. **The prisoners issue is a human rights issue**. We are asking that you use whatever influence you can to force a change in the British position and to resolve this present crisis.

On October 30 Mick O'Brien will have spent 100 days on protest over the treatment of Irish political prisoners in English jails. To mark that day SAOIRSE and the **RELEASE MICK O'BRIEN CAMPAIGN** will hold a protest vigil in Dún Laoghaire town centre on Saturday 28 between 1-4pm. **Show your support - Join the vigil. You can help further by writing to :-**

- the British Ambassador at the British Embassy, Merrion Road, Dublin 4, or
- to Michael Howard MP, Home Secretary, 50 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1,

expressing your concern for the plight of Political Prisoners in England and calling on the British government to adopt a humanitarian approach to the issue in light of the ongoing peace process. For further information please contact Michael on Tel: 8722609.

## RELEASE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS NOW