

REPUBLICAN SINN FEIN

FOR CONFIRMATION CONTACT
DES LONG AT (061) 343314

POBLACHTACH

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ATTENTION

NEWSROOM/News Editor

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RSF HOLD PROTEST OVER JAIL CONDITIONS

The conditions under which a Republican prisoner is being held in Cork prison were compared to the blanket protest H Blocks of the North at a protest today in Dublin.

Clareman Michael Hegarty, a member of the Ard Comhairle of the Republican Sinn Fein party appeared on a warrant from the Special Criminal Court. He had been taken from Cork jail where he is on a "blanket protest" in a bid to be granted political status and transferred to Portlaoise prison.

Mr. Hegarty has been naked in his cell, denied letters and visits and all the so called normal privileges of prison because of his campaign to be granted political status

In court he protested about the conditions under which he is being held as a Republican prisoner. While Mr. Hegarty was in court RSF held a picket at the Department of Justice to highlight his case.

RSF Vice-President Des Long condemned the prison conditions and said that Mr. de Rossa had on numerous occasions attended commemorations for Sean McCaughey who died because he was held under similar conditions. "The conditions under which McCaughey was held so incensed the Labour Party that they sent a delegation to investigate the prison conditions," he said.

"We now have the situation where Dick Spring, leader of the same party and de Rossa are guilty of imposing the same conditions on another Republican prisoner. At the inquest into McCaughey's death, Sean McBride asked the prison staff if they would hold a dog in such conditions. They answered no. The people of Ireland must now shout **NO** to inhumane conditions in which Michael Hegarty is being held."

(Ends)