

BIRMINGHAM PRISONERS SOLIDARITY

Newsletter Number 1

TROOPS OUT NOW FREE ALL IRISH POLITICAL PRISONERS.

The so called 'Peace Process' has meant nothing to Irish political prisoners - conditions have in fact worsened. They are still kept in Special Secure Units segregated from other prisoners, with closed visits and denial of association rights and 23 hour lock up.

The crime committed is by the British state in their continued denial of the political status that is due. The Irish POW's are not the criminals, but have been put away for fighting the British states occupation of Ireland. We believe in the legitimate right of the Irish people to take up arms to kick the British administration out.

BPS supports the demonstration to commemorate Bloody Sunday, as part of our support for the Irish people's right to self determination. The shoot to kill policy so evident in 1972 Derry continues today with the murder of

Diarmuid O'Neill - shot dead by London police last September.

We believe there is a common enemy in the British state and we want to express our wish to work with Irish political solidarity and community groups to build solidarity with prisoners.

ROISIN McALISKEY

Roisin is being held at Holloway prison on a extradition warrant concerning an IRA attack on a British army base in Germany. She is five months pregnant generally in ill health and rapidly losing weight. Please write mentioning only the health issues and humanitarian grounds to 1)The German Embassy asking them not to oppose bail and 2)Michael Howard the Home Office asking him to allow bail. Please also send cards and messages of support to Roisin McAliskey, Holloway Prison, Parkhurst Road, London N7 ONY.

IN SOLIDARITY FROM SATPAL RAM

' I wish that I could be with you on the Bloody Sunday march but like many I am imprisoned, for life, by the British state as a result of defending myself. I extend my support to all who are fighting for liberty, equality and justice. My thoughts are with the Irish people and Irish prisoners who have fought so heroically and strongly to defend themselves and will soon repell the British state.'



Banner depicting the words of Mairead Farrell, victim of Britain's shoot-to-kill policy

Photo: Jill Baker

FREE SATPAL RAM

Satpal is now in his 11th year of a life sentence for defending himself against a racist attack in Lozells, Birmingham 1986. Two appeals have been turned down, the latest in November 95, ruling that the conviction is 'safe'. Not a word we would use to describe Satpal's treatment in the many prisons he has been in. Beatings, physical and mental abuse, forced strip searches, ghosting (being moved from prison to prison in segregation every 28 days), access to property, phonecalls and visits limited or denied, drugs planted on him...just some of the shit he has endured since Feb 96. Now thanks to pressure from his supporters Satpal is in Gartree, in the Midlands, close to his family. He has got legal aid to look at his treatment by the Prison Service but due to incompetent legal advice plans to take his case to the European Courts have floundered due to the 6 month ruling. Satpal would be released in Nov 97 but he won't admit guilt and agree to release on licence. We continue to support him in his campaign to get his conviction overturned.

STILL ON DEATH ROW FREE MUMIA ABU JAMAL!

In 1981, Mumia Abu Jamal stopped his taxi to protest at the beating of a black man by a cop. The cop shot Mumia and then was himself shot dead by two unknown assailants.



Mumia is a black revolutionary who came to prominence at the age of 15 when he was Minister For Information at the Philadelphia Chapter of the Black Panther Party. As an activist and journalist Mumia was a thorn in the side of the establishment known as 'The Voice of The Voiceless'. So, the Philadelphia police clearly had a motive for their actions when they framed Mumia for the killing of the cop. Mumia was denied proper legal representation at the trial where the judge distorted political slogans and the activities of the Black Panthers to 'prove' that Mumia was guilty.

State force in America targetted black revolutionaries in the 60s and 70s, purposefully orchestrating shootouts, frame ups and collaborated with Klu Klux Klan murders. Mumia was framed as a continuation of this state policy

and despite much of the sketchy evidence at trial now being discredited the American state refuses to release Mumia.

An international campaign opposed and defeated the planned execution of Mumia on August 17 1995. The execution was suspended, pending appeals that seem set to grind on for some time.

Mumia must be freed and the death penalty abolished. To this end BPS is planning a demonstration for Mumia and calls for your support in building this event. Get in touch.

BIRMINGHAM PRISONERS' SOLIDARITY

is a newly formed group, our intended activities are as follows:

FOCUSING ON INMATES IN LOCAL PRISONS

To use our resources best, we have decided to focus our support on inmates of local prisons (Long Lartin and Winson Green). This does not exclude all other prisoners so read on....

HELPING SET UP OTHER CAMPAIGNS

We will work with other prisoners, their friends, family and supporters to assist the forming of a campaign.

MAKING RESOURCES AVAILABLE

At present we have an apple mac computer for writing and layout of campaign materials. We also have a photocopier and access to cheap printing. We will assist in the writing and layout where requested.

SUPPORTING AND LIAISING WITH OTHER CAMPAIGNS

We will support and mobilise for prison protests, pickets, etc organised by other campaigns and advertise them as widely as possible.

ORGANISING PROTESTS

We support PRISONERS JUSTICE DAY (August 10th) and will build support for it in the Midlands. We will organise protests outside prisons, police stations or wherever appropriate.

WRITING TO PRISONERS

We will endeavour to keep contact with prisoners and build up a network of supporters who are willing to write to prisoners. We are collecting books especially revolutionary literature to help the political development of prisoners.

**Interested? Contact BPS. PO BOX 3241
SALTLEY BIRMINGHAM B8 3DP**

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