

Write to the men....

Patrick Hill
Gartree Prison, Leicester Road
Market Harborough, Leics.
LE1 7RP.

Billy Power
Richard McIlkenny
Full Sutton Prison,
Stamford Bridge, East Riding,
York. YO4 1PS.

Gerry Hunter
John Walker
Hugh Callaghan
Long Lartin Prison,
South Littleton, Evesham,
Worcs. WR11 5TZ.

CAMPAIGN ADDRESSES

NATIONAL BIRMINGHAM SIX CAMPAIGN
c/o National Secretary,
7 Frederick Street, Birmingham.
B1 3HE.

LONDON CAMPAIGN GROUP FOR THE
BIRMINGHAM SIX,
1 Orlestone Road, LONDON N7 8LH.

BIRMINGHAM CAMPAIGN FOR THE
BIRMINGHAM SIX,
7 Frederick Street,
BIRMINGHAM B1 3HE.

BIRMINGHAM SIX CAMPAIGN
(NORTH-WEST)
53 Glynne Street BOLTON BL4 7DN.

SHEFFIELD CAMPAIGN FOR
THE BIRMINGHAM SIX,
c/o Osborn House,
138 Burngreave Road, SHEFFIELD 3.

SOUTHAMPTON BIRMINGHAM 6 CAMPAIGN
55 Avenue Road, SOUTHAMPTON SO2 1AW.

OXFORD CAMPAIGN FOR
THE BIRMINGHAM SIX
Box E, 34 Cowley Road, OXFORD.

NOTTINGHAM BIRMINGHAM 6 CAMPAIGN
c/o Nottm TUC, Box No. 5,
118 Mansfield Road, NG1 3HL.



AVAILABLE FROM SHEFFIELD
BIRMINGHAM SIX CAMPAIGN
SETS OF FOUR POSTCARDS
(IN PINK & BLACK)
£1.00 per pack (plus postage)

OTHER CAMPAIGNS

MARTIN FORAN CAMPAIGN
c/o "Conviction"
P.O. Box 522
SHEFFIELD S1 3FF.

BROADWATER FARM DEFENCE CAMPAIGN
79 Tangmere, Willan Road,
LONDON N17. 01 885 3752

WINCHESTER 3 CAMPAIGN
c/o Grassroots
1 Newton Street
MANCHESTER 1.
061 236 3112



T-SHIRTS

	individual price	post & packing
"T"-Shirt XL, large design	£6.60	40p
"T"-Shirt M, small design	£6.60	40p
Child's "T"-Shirt (please state age wanted)	£4.20	30p
Poster (approx 12"x17")	50p	30p(per5)
Enamel badges	£1.50	20p(per5)

RAFFLE - prizes made or donated by the Six and their families.
£1 per book of 4 tickets. Draw to take place 17th March 1990.

Birmingham Campaign for the BIRMINGHAM SIX

Trades Union Council, 7 Frederick Street, Birmingham B1 3HE

NATIONAL BIRMINGHAM SIX CAMPAIGN

JAN 90 NEWSLETTER 30p

1990 ~ OUR YEAR!

"Since Gerry got out I've been bombarded with letters, cards etc from people all over, raging at our injustice. The number of ordinary people wrting to me is unbelievable. I know the Campaign is snowballing. NOTHING, NOTHING can stop it now. The truth is coming out at long last and I know the end is in sight. 1990 is our year and God willing this is the last Christmas card I'll be sending from jail. Happy New Year from

Paddy Joe Hill, HM Prison Gartree"

IN THIS NEWSLETTER:-

The Evidence and the Home Office	2
International News	3
Campaign News	4
Trade Unions	5
Lord Denning	5
West Midlands Update	6
The Reade Schedule	7
Church News	8
Letter from Richard McIlkenny	9
Prison News	9/10
The Guildford Four	11
Join the Campaign	11
Contact Addresses etc.	Back Page

Produced by Sheffield Campaign for the B'ham 6

Stop Press

The Birmingham Six Campaign would like to thank everybody who helped make the CHRISTY MOORE concert such a huge success.

THE HOME OFFICE AND THE EVIDENCE

Since the failure of the Birmingham Six appeal in January 1988, the position of the Home Office has been that the case cannot be re-opened without "new evidence" or "a new consideration of substance".

A "new consideration of substance" has existed since the release of the Guildford Four and the revelations surrounding the West Midlands Police. That new consideration is that the police might have committed perjury at the 1975 trial, as the defence have always maintained. The fact that half the police officers involved in the Six's case have since been in trouble for doing precisely that, gives this consideration a great deal of substance. But the Home Office still refuses to act.

New evidence was presented to the Home Office shortly before Christmas by the men's solicitors. They did not publicise this at the time for fear that potential witnesses would be harassed by the media, or even suffer the threats and intimidation that were inflicted on WPC Joyce Lyness by West Midlands police officers prior to her giving evidence at the 87 appeal.

The Home Office chose to publicise the existence of the new evidence on the day that Home Secretary David Waddington met with Gerry Collins, Irish Foreign Minister, to discuss the case. Thus demands from Ireland and the International Community can be fobbed off for a little longer: the government is doing something - it is looking at the new evidence. And now the world awaits with baited breath the Home Office's pronouncement on whether this evidence is strong enough to warrant re-opening the case of the Birmingham Six.

But we must not forget that the Home Office's insistence on new evidence is part of a strategy both to deny the strength of the existing evidence and to cover up for the wilful stupidity of the appeal court verdict. The new evidence relates mainly to the men's injuries while in police custody and to discrepancies in police testimony at the original trial, so it can only confirm what is known already. The weight attributed to it by the Home Office will be directly related to how much pressure at home and abroad the Government is under to act quickly to resolve this case.

The Home Office is playing a desperate game, rewriting the rules as it goes along. We must continue to challenge its position and point out its inconsistencies by writing directly to the Home Secretary and to our own MPs. We must tell them that we want the Six released NOW; that, irrespective of the strength of the new evidence, the Home Secretary already has the power and the grounds to re-open the case; that the Six are not just an embarrassment to be disposed of at the Government's convenience, but six human beings for whom every day spent in prison, in the knowledge that the whole world is aware of their innocence, is an outrage perpetrated against them and their families and that we will not tolerate it any longer.

RT. HON. DAVID
WADDINGTON
M.P.
HOUSE OF
COMMONS
LONDON
SW1 0AA

WADDINGTON'S OPTIONS

order limited police inquiry into new evidence



"THE HOME OFFICE ARE SICK OF THIS CASE AND THEY WILL BE EVEN SICKER IF THEY GET THOUSANDS OF LETTERS ABOUT IT."

Paddy McIlkenny.

refute strength of new evidence and do nothing

accept strength of new evidence

decide to refer case back to Court of Appeal

advise Government to employ "Royal Perogative" mechanism in order to side-step the Courts.

DPP contests Appeal

Appeal not contested (as with Guildford Four)

remit sentences and release the Six*

Pardon the Six*

?

set up inquiry into convictions.

Exoneration

*Remission of sentence means convictions stand: no compensation, Royal "Pardon" means exoneration and entitlement to compensation.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Case of Six to go before UN commission

I. Times

By Maol Muire Tynan

THE CASE for freeing the Birmingham Six is to be placed before the United Nations in an attempt to bring extra international pressure on the British Government to release the men.

Mr Kadar Asmal, Dean of the Faculty of Law at Trinity College, Dublin, will make the submission on behalf of the Six to the UN Human Rights Commission in February. The submission is being sponsored by the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, a group founded in 1946.

Work on the submission is already underway in co-operation with the solicitor acting on behalf of the men, Ms Gareth Peirce.

"The reason the Birmingham Six are not free is because their case is the most serious criticism of the British judicial system," Mr Asmal said. The Six were an outstanding example of its defects, he added, and it was of crucial importance to bring this case before a "very prestigious international forum" such as the UN commission.

Taking the case to the UN was part of a "cumulative pressure" being exerted on the British Government and was one way of focusing international attention on the injustice, he said.

"The UK, as a democratic country, would be sensitive at the bar of international public opinion. In the light of the British Home Secretary's refusal to review the convictions of the Birmingham Six, it is most important that we bring it up," he said.

He also called on the Irish Government to be "more persistent" in highlighting the "gross miscarriage of justice" in this case. After the IADL had put its case to the UN commission, the "onus" would be on the British Government to justify the continued detention of the men.

Only non-governmental organisations with observer status at the UN are entitled to make submissions of this nature. The association had already issued a report on the killing of three IRA members in Gibraltar and the shooting dead of Belfast lawyer, Mr Pat Finucane.

The Campaign is now receiving requests for Information Packs from all over the world.

U.S.A.

US hearings to focus on Birmingham Six

THE BIRMINGHAM SIX case is to be the subject of formal hearings before the United States Congressional Human Rights Caucus next February, adding to the international pressure on Britain to reopen the 1974 pub bombings case, writes Leonard Doyle.

The hearings, which will become the focus of a Congressional inquiry, are bound to embarrass Foreign Office officials.

Coming at a time when the Bush Administration is critical of Britain's plans to forcibly repatriate Vietnamese refugees from Hong Kong, the hearings will keep US attention on British human rights.

INDEPENDENT 1.12.89

The caucus is an informal grouping of 180 Congressmen, chaired by Tom Lantos, a Democrat. He decided to hold hearings on the Birmingham Six after a meeting between Gerard Conlon - one of the Guildford Four whose convictions were quashed - and Congressman Joe Kennedy, of Massachusetts.

The level of embarrassment is now so great it is only a question of time. It is a cause célèbre all round the world.

Chris Mullin M.P.

EUROPE

Weltspiegel - an important current affairs programme in West Germany - will be broadcasting a programme on the men's case in early February; and there will be a feature on the case in the March edition of Stern magazine.

There has also been coverage of the case in the Danish Press and on Portuguese and French television.

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ORDERS INQUIRY

On the 23rd November 1989, European MEPs passed by 73-23 votes a resolution re-affirming their belief in the innocence of the Birmingham Six, and calling for review of their case. The resolution also called for a fully independent investigation into the West Midlands Police force, including their part in the case of the Birmingham Six, and instructed the European Parliament's legal affairs committee to inquire into and report back on the case.

The overwhelming support for the resolution which was tabled by Christine Crawley (Birmingham MEP) is a severe embarrassment for the British Government. All but two of the British Tory MEPs voted against the resolution after intense pressure from the Home Office was brought to bear. There were nine abstentions, including the two Tories, Lord Bethel and Peter Price and Ulster Unionists Nicholson and Paisley.

During the debate, Tory MPs claimed that the European Parliament had no right to interfere in the legal affairs of a member state. Christine Crawley replied that it was their right "to tackle injustice whether it is done to six million people, six thousand people or six people."

Home Secretary David Waddington has told the Commons that he believes the inquiry by the European Parliament to be "inappropriate", and the Six's convictions "a matter wholly outside the European Parliament's competence." In the same reply (To Sir John Farr, longtime supporter of the Six) he suggested that the Legal Affairs Committee had not yet decided to conduct the inquiry. This was a deliberate, if transparent, attempt to mislead the House. The inquiry is going ahead, and a report will be ready by the Spring.

Joe Kennedy was denied permission to visit the Six in December because of the strict rules governing visits to Category "A" prisoners. Within a week their category "A" status was lifted, by which time Mr. Kennedy was back in the States. However Joe Kennedy did meet with Father Bobby Gilmore, Chair of the National Campaign, to discuss how the Campaign can assist and advise the U.S. Congressional human rights Caucus; and Congressman Brian Donnelly - leader of the powerful Friends of Ireland Lobby - visited Paddy Hill for a full briefing on the case on January 19th.

'More and more people in the United States are convinced that the 1975 verdict was not beyond reasonable doubt and that the 1987 appeal was faulted.'

Cardinal John O'Connor of New York

PARLIAMENT

LOCAL NEWS

An Early Day Motion welcoming the release of the Guildford Four and requesting the re-opening of the case of the Birmingham Six was tabled on October 17th, and has received wide support in the Commons.

MPs are continuing to prize bits of information from a reluctant Home Office about the inquiry into the West Midlands Serious Crimes Squad through the use of Parliamentary questions. After nearly 2 years of insisting that all but one of the West Midlands police officers who were involved in the interrogations of the Six have had unblemished records ever since, persistent questions have uncovered an entirely different picture. (See Page 6)

The growing awareness of this reality, in Birmingham as well as in Parliament, has brought one of Birmingham's more rightwing members to his feet. Mr Anthony Beaumont-Dark, who since the appeal had opposed the re-opening of the case, expressed a desire that the part played in the pub bombings investigation by four members of the serious crimes squad should be investigated by the current police inquiry.

In letters to campaign members, many MPs have expressed their support for the Campaign. Roy Hattersley, deputy leader of the Labour Party, now supports the immediate setting-up of an independent review body to look at the case of the Six: Paddy Ashdown, leader of the SLD, has supported the re-opening of the case for years,

MPs and MEPs who are interested in the case have agreed to meet with National Campaign members on a regular basis.

IRELAND

Foreign minister Gerry Collins and An Taoiseach Charles Haughey have progressed from their previous position of "concern" to one that more accurately reflects the anger of Irish public opinion. Public support for the Six was massively demonstrated on December 9th in Dublin, where a 1,000 strong pageant was joined by thousands more spectators, bringing the City to a standstill.

At a meeting with members of the Six's families, Gerry Collins promised that he would press for Richard and Bill's move to a more accessible prison, and raise the Six's case with other European Foreign Ministers, ensuring that it's on the Foreign Ministers Meeting Agenda in 1990 (a meeting which he chairs). The Irish Embassy has also been instructed to visit the men on a regular basis and to keep the Campaign and families informed on the progress of meetings on the case between Irish and British Government representatives.

URGENT!

PLEASE SEND COMPLETED PETITION FORMS BACK TO BIRMINGHAM CAMPAIGN BY FRIDAY FEB 16th 1990

London: North Islington Labour Party have adopted the men's case with each ward adopting an individual prisoner. They are hoping to spread this support to other London constituencies.

The London Campaign have organised the benefit concert with Christy Moore, Peggy Seeger, Ian Campbell and others on January 27th at Wembley Centre. It is hoped that the proceeds from this will lift the National Campaign out of the red.

Derbyshire County Council which is Labour controlled, has passed a motion calling on the Home Secretary to arrange a re-trial before a jury. This prompted a walk-out by the Conservatives, but the Liberal Democrats gave their unanimous support.

Birmingham City Council have adopted a resolution calling upon the Government to "listen to the voice of reason and re-open the case immediately." The motion was seconded by Council Leader Sir Richard Knowles and was supported by the SLD and some Conservatives. The council also undertook to write to the Home Secretary and to encourage other councils to adopt similar resolutions.

Sandwell Council was one of the first local authorities to support the Six. It passed a motion last year calling for the present inquiry into West Midlands police to include the case of the Birmingham Six.

The Birmingham Six now have the support of most of Birmingham's leading dignitaries, including Church leaders and the city's MPs.

The Birmingham Law School's independent inquiry into the Serious Crimes Squad have now looked at over 70 cases and have detected a clear pattern of corruption going back to 1974. A report should be ready by June.

Delegates from Preston and Bolton Trades Councils joined North-West Campaigners and other British groups on the Parade for Justice in Dublin on December 9th. Earlier in December, a very successful dance in Manchester Irish Centre raised over £700 for the Campaign.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Birmingham - February 9th (see page 6)
Oxford - February 16th >> Contact Campaign
Barnsley - February 27th >> for further details

NEW GROUPS have been formed in Derby, Leeds, Stockport, Wolverhampton and Glasgow. Contact National Campaign Secretary for details.

A sea-change in Birmingham public opinion is reflected in the local press and TV coverage of the case, and the way that many Birmingham citizens have now responded to appeals from the Six and their families to come forward if they know of anything that might help their case.

A victim of the 1974 Birmingham pub bombings has called for the release of the Six, who are serving life sentences for the atrocity, writes Thomas Quirke. Jane Burwood, 34, said: "The forensic evidence has been proved fallible. Now the only evidence keeping the men in prison is the confessions. "Their confessions were inaccurate. None of them correctly stated where the bombs were placed."

The National Birmingham Six Campaign welcomes affiliations from Trade Union branches. Current affiliates include: MSF (Brighton); NALGO (Bristol); GMB(S,Region); NALGO (Newcastle); MSF (Leicester); and Trade Councils in Leicester, Leeds, Oxford, Preston, Bolton and Nottingham.

The following TUC Branches have recently adopted resolutions supporting the men's case:

Birmingham TUC	Redditch TUC	Nottingham TUC
Sheffield TUC	MSF (Birmingham City Center)	NUJ (London)
GMB (S.Region)	UCATT (S.Region)	EEPTU (London)
NALGO (London)	NALGO (Greenwich)	NALGO (Birmingham)
NUPE Social Services (B'ham)	NATFHE (High Peak)	APEX (Holborn)

Branches within NUPE, NALGO, TGWU, and MSF have put resolutions forward to National Conferences this year. Please make sure that these resolutions are supported.

If your branch has supported the Birmingham Six, but is not included in the above lists, please contact the National Secretary (address on back page) so that we can bring our information up to date. We'd also be grateful for copies of Resolutions adopted etc.

If your branch has not yet added its voice to the growing Campaign, encourage it to do so. Model resolutions are available from the National Secretary, but any resolution based on the following lines will do:-

This branch (district/committee) believes:-
that the Birmingham Six are innocent, and that their continued imprisonment represents a gross miscarriage of justice:

and resolves:-

1. to write to the Home Secretary, calling upon him to reopen the case/release the Six.
2. to forward a resolution to Conference/NEC etc.
3. to affiliate to the Campaign for the Birmingham Six and/or send a donation.
4. to circulate information about the case within the Union.
5. to call on the TUC to publish its report on the case.

NEW SERIES

Great British Judges. Number One LORD DENNING

"If the six men win, it will mean that the police were guilty of perjury, that they were guilty of violence and threats, that the confessions were involuntary and were improperly admitted in evidence, and that the convictions were erroneous. That would mean the Home Secretary would either have to recommend they be pardoned or he would have to remit the case to the Court of Appeal. This is such an appalling vista that every sensible person in the land would say: it cannot be right these actions should go any further".
Dismissing the men's civil action against the police. January 1980

"I certainly would not have made that statement if I had such information as this (the Guildford 4 case) before me . . . I said what I thought was right at the time, but new events throw different light on matters, and that is what happened in this case.

Speaking on RTE's "Morning Ireland" radio programme October 18th 1989.

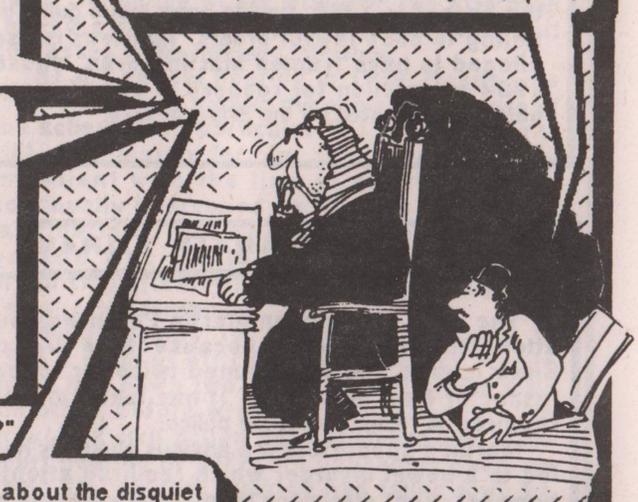
"I think there's quite a good case for saying (the Birmingham Six case) ought to be looked into again. The position is that when I dealt with the case in the 1980 appeal, I said it would be an appalling vista to re-open the matter again. But now, in a sense, after the Guildford Four, and particularly after the suggestions against the West Midlands Police, there is certainly a case for reconsideration . . . It does give room for disquiet. But on the other hand its a very difficult decision whether it should be re-opened or not."

Interviewer: "What would you do about the disquiet?"

"There it is. I don't think you can do anything about the disquiet except by re-opening it, and I don't know that we ought to do that. We may have to put up with it. . . I would not say there is a strong enough case for re-opening the case of the Birmingham Six. You've got your case and you must make it. If you ask what I should advise, I would say do not re-open it. The whole matter has been gone into already too much."

On the Marian Finucane RTE radio programme. December 8th 1989.

... I'M SORRY M'LUD... I CAN'T KEEP THIS APPALLING VISTA DOWN HERE ANY LONGER



NEXT in this series Lord Lane

The West Midlands Serious Crimes Squad

The Squad is currently helping the police with their enquiries. All of its members were put on "non-operational" duties some months ago, following the collapse of several prosecutions after widespread allegations of assaulting prisoners and fabricating evidence by Squad members. What is of particular interest to the Birmingham Six case, of course, is that a number of those Squad members currently under investigation by the Shaw Inquiry were among the officers originally involved 15 years ago in the Birmingham case. But how many exactly?

On 26th October last, the then Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd, stated in response to a Parliamentary question that only one current member of the squad had been involved with the Birmingham Six interrogations; but by 5th December, it was admitted in the House that four surviving squad officers had in fact been involved. Yet, as recently as 13th January, a Guardian update article claimed that "eleven of the Birmingham Six interrogating team... have since been either disciplined, involved in civil actions for assault, or become the subject of complaints about the fabrication of evidence".

These eleven include Det. Sgt. Michael Hornby, the subject of several complaints regarding fabricated evidence and currently on extended "sick leave"; Det. Sgt. Ray Bennett, now Det Chief Inspector (head of the Squad at the time of disbandment), who interviewed Paddy Hill; Det. Sgt. James Kelly, reprimanded on four counts of "discreditable conduct"; and Sgt. Brian Morton, sentenced in 1983 to 12 months for assaulting a prisoner.

Then there is Det. Insp. Paul Matthews, who, the Secretary of State for the Home Office admitted on 14th December in a Commons written reply, had been "required to resign from the Force" in 1986, having been found guilty of failing to obey lawful orders. Matthews is also alleged to have framed Martin Foran, whose 1984 conviction for robbery is one of those being investigated by the Shaw inquiry.

The Serious Crimes Squad also provides a link between the case of the recently released Guildford Four and that of the Birmingham Six, according to MP Chris Mullins. He has revealed that a team of nine Surrey police officers investigating the Guildford and Woolwich Bombings was in the West Midlands at the same time that the Birmingham bombing investigation was underway.

He has asked the Home Office to state whether the Surrey team was in fact present at the Birmingham Six interrogations at Queen's Road police station, "where, no doubt, they would have picked up a tip or two on how to carry out an investigation". The Home Office has said it is unable to supply "precise details" on the matter.

At present, then, it is the direct connection of the Serious Crimes Squad to the Birmingham interrogations which provides the strongest case for an urgent re-examination of the whole process of the men's convictions. Every one of the upright guardians of the law named above - and others as yet unnamed - were involved in questioning one or other of the Birmingham Six in 1974: how long must it be before the Government recognises the fact that the presence of so many now discredited officers at these interrogations provides sufficient grounds for an immediate re-opening of the case of the Birmingham Six?

PUBLIC MEETING

to discuss Justice for Victims of West Midlands Serious Crimes Squad
FRIDAY 9TH FEBRUARY: JOSIAH MASON HALL
CHAMBERLAIN SQUARE: BIRMINGHAM 7PM

S P E A K E R S

- Christine Crawley MEP
- Andrew Puddephat (Gen Sec NCCL)
- Cllr Mike Nangle
- Margaret McIlkenny
daughter of Richard McIlkenny of the Birmingham 6
- Ann Whelan
fighting for those imprisoned in the Bridgewater case

THE CASE OF MARTIN FORAN

The case of Irishman Martin Foran was outlined in the October Newsletter. It has come to attention again recently because it the first case outside the period 1986-8 to be looked at by the Shaw inquiry: he was framed twice for robbery - in 1985, and before that in 1978 - by Detective Inspector Paul Matthews. It has taken the Home Office over 3 years to admit that Matthews was required to resign from the police.

Martin's supporters are anxious about his health: a long hunger strike during his first imprisonment led to a bowel disorder which required attention during his second term in jail. The prison service, however, kept disrupting his medical treatment, and caused him to miss appointments, by moving him from jail to jail. In sheer desperation, Martin took a member of staff hostage, which gained him a colostomy operation at the cost of another 6 years added to his sentence. After the operation Martin was assaulted by prison staff: the wound has become infected and is not being treated. His case is urgent.

Finally, the local media in Birmingham has been carrying stories that Martin informed on the Six in 1974. Gerry Hunter has dismissed this as "absolute and total lies", and asked that his best wishes be passed on to Martin and his wife.

The Reade Schedule: Unanswered questions.

23.11.74	11.15 AM TO 12.5 PM 12.20 PM 1.10 PM	D F MCGRE DS BENNETT DE BRAND.	HILL 12.05 11.15 AM 11.55 AM 12.20 PM 1.10 PM	QUEENS RD INTERVIEW Room.	A B C D E F. + COAJ POWERS VOL STATEMENT PUT TO HIM IN PREVIOUS INTERVIEW
----------	--	--------------------------------------	---	---------------------------------	--

The entry relating to the crucial morning interview when Hill is supposed to have confessed. Why did Reade change the times?

23.11.74	12.45 PM TO 5 PM	D F MCGRE DS BENNETT DE BRAND.	HILL OUT	QUEENS RD INTERVIEW Room.	A B C D E F BY MCGRE HILL WALKERS VOL STATEMENT PUT TO HIM IN PREVIOUS INTERVIEW
----------	------------------------	--------------------------------------	-------------	---------------------------------	---

At the trial in 1975, Paddy Hill said he was interviewed on Saturday afternoon. The police said he wasn't. Who lied in court?

In October 1989, the Appeal Court freed the four people convicted of the Guildford and Woolwich pub bombings, after it had been shown that the Surrey police had falsified records and committed perjury at the original trial in 1975. The decision dealt a severe blow to the public's faith in the integrity of the police force, and to the police's credibility as a whole.

The case against the Guildford Four was dropped because it was proved that five police officers:

- * re-wrote and combined three statements to fabricate evidence against Patrick Armstrong,
 - * lied under oath about times, duration and existence of interviews, in order to support false testimony.
 - * conspired to give perjured evidence to secure the convictions.
- The Guildford Four's version of these events was thus supported by custody sheets, police records and the contemporaneous notes of some of the interviews. The parallels with the Birmingham Six case are considerable in that:
- * key confessional statements taken by the police are utterly disputed.
 - * the time, duration and existence of interviews as testified by police conflict with accounts given by the prisoners.
 - * the defence have always argued that police officers conspired to give perjured evidence.

In the case of the Birmingham Six, the fact that the interview records, custody logs and 2,000 non-material witness statements are missing strengthens the arguments for conspiracy and brings a sinister feel to the case.

One document, however, has survived. It is the "Reade Schedule", entitled after Detective Superintendent George Reade who led the police investigation into the Birmingham pub bombings. It is a handwritten timetable of the interviews in custody of the six men, from 22nd-24th November 1974 and it is set out in columns under the typed headings: Date: Time: Officers: Prisoners: Place: Ref: and "Knowledge of".

On the first page is written "Master Copy". Most of the information that follows is written carefully in capitals, but this has been added to, altered and in some cases crossed out by the same hand. Most of the alterations are to the times of the interviews. The obvious explanation is that these interview times were being juggled around to suit the police version of events which was to be presented in court.

For example, an interview with Patrick Hill on the Saturday morning is first entered as having taken place between 11.15am to 12.5pm. Next to this is jotted a list of times, two of which are entered below the original entry, and one (1.10pm) is ticked. This is when the police at the trial said that the interview with Hill had ended. Another interview has been crossed out and "OUT" scrawled across. Hill has always maintained that he was interviewed twice that day. The police at the trial said the afternoon interview never happened, and that Hill confessed in the morning interview.

At the appeal hearing in 1988, Reade was totally unable to explain the origin and purpose of the schedule, in particular this entry relating to Hill. Fortunately for him, the judge was visibly impatient with the line of questioning. He continually intervened on Reade's behalf, and later declared that "Reade was quite clearly not a person who would have been capable of organising or carrying through such a huge and complicated conspiracy."

Philip Buckley, for one, would not agree. In 1975 a team of officers led by George Reade threw him down two flights of stairs, one after the other, before wrongfully arresting him. He brought a civil action against Reade and, at the court hearing in 1977, ten policemen gave the same story - that Buckley had fallen down the stairs, from top to bottom. When the solicitor pointed out that there was a landing in the middle, and brought in photographs to prove it, the jury found against the police and Buckley was awarded £800. Until then, said Buckley, "it was only my word against ten policemen. Mr Reade and his men had told a pack of lies."

CHURCH NEWS

The Growing Campaign

The National Campaign has received numerous requests for information from Justice and Peace groups from all over the country, some of which have affiliated to the Campaign or formed their own groups to campaign on the issue. These groups, together with their Anglican equivalents - the Diocesan Boards of Social Responsibility - have done much over the years to raise the case of the Birmingham Six with their more conservative leaders. Crucial to the Campaign within the Churches has been the longstanding concern of those members of the prison chaplaincy service who have spent many hours with the Six, and who have been convinced from the beginning of their innocence.

The conduct of the Six in prison, and particularly the commitment to Christian principles, which underlies the letters and writings of Billy Power and Richard McIlkenny, have played a large part in the stirring of Christian conscience in Britain. The sermon for the St Patrick's Day Mass at Westminster Cathedral in 1989, held in front of 900 people, including the Irish Ambassador, Embassy staff and Irish Government Minister Ray Burke, was devoted mainly to Billy Power's meditation "One Away". This piece of writing had been passed to the Rev. Pat Browne by the prison chaplain after a meeting with Billy in prison. Acknowledging the prisoner's innocence (though not his name) and the 14 years already spent in prison, the sermon went on:

"A man locked away for life is freer than most of us who come and go as we will. I have thought a lot about him since and have come to realise that his freedom consists in this. He has no fear. He is not bitter or resentful. His mind and heart have been given over to love. And love casts out fear."

A former member of a prison chaplaincy team, writing a religious column for the Sunday Correspondent (19.11.89), noted a "sacrificial generosity" in the same piece of writing by Billy Power, and, in the words of Gerry Conlon on his release: "If this stops another innocent person going to prison, it will be well worth it." She also described the beatings inflicted on the Six, and went on to succinctly point out why the Six have remained in prison when the authorities have known for years that they are innocent:

"... it is not possible simply to admit that a mistake was made, for to exonerate the Six is to inculcate others. What has happened is that the Six have taken on the role of scapegoats to deflect blame from their violent attackers, in addition to their additional role of scapegoats for the outrage society felt about the bombings."

*"One Away" by Billy Power was printed in the October Newsletter

Statement by Birmingham Church Leaders

The public statement, made in November by the joint presidents of the Birmingham Council of Christian Churches, supported calls for a fresh review of the convictions, raised questions about the adequacy of our Appeals procedures, and expressed the opinion that the inquiry into the West Midlands Serious Crimes Squad should look into the Six's case. The statement gave a timely lead both to other church leaders and to other public figures in Birmingham. (see page 2) Private letters to the Home Office from Bishops all over the country have received the usual stonewalling replies, but the Home Office has had to acknowledge the moral weight behind the Churches' Campaign, and in December began to noticeably soften its line on the likelihood of the case being re-opened.

The Right Rev. Samuel Poyntz, Anglican Bishop of Connor in Northern Ireland, speaking at a meeting in Glasgow in November, has also publicly joined the calls for a new inquiry into the case.

Ireland

A "Special Mass for Justice" was held at St Mary's Pro Cathedral in Dublin on December 8th as part of a week of activities culminating in the Parade of Innocence on the Saturday. Relatives of the Six joined Paul Hill, Gerard Conlon and the families of other innocent Irish prisoners in the service; Breda Power and Siobhan McIlkenny read one of the lessons. "This is a celebratory Mass of thanksgiving for the release of the Guildford Four" said the Most Rev. Dr James Kavanagh, "but it is also to pray for the vindication and release of the Birmingham Six."

On January 19th, Ireland's Catholic Bishops Conference issued a statement calling Britain to "re-examine without delay" the case of the Birmingham Six. The statement repeated the hierarchy's "conviction that the six prisoners have been the victims of a gross miscarriage of justice" and declared that in view of the recent allegations regarding the Serious Crimes Squad "the possibility of false evidence having been given in the trial of the Birmingham Six can no longer be ignored."

Billy Power in Full Sutton Prison, Oct 89



LETTER FROM RICHARD McILKENNY

The following passages are from a letter from Richard to all Christian Groups working for Peace and Justice. It was written shortly after the failure of the 1987 Appeal, and the refusal of the House of Lords to hear the case. (Announced in April 1988)

When I said to my friend "If there is anything to do to help you only have to say it" I really meant every word though I did not expect to be asked to do anything except to keep on praying that those who work so hard for justice around the world may by the Grace of God be successful.

After all being locked up in prison does not leave much scope for actually "doing" things. I write concerning my friends and myself "The Birmingham Six" and I have spent alot of time thinking about what I should write and I have decided that if there is anyone out there who does not know all about us and the great injustice we and our families have suffered for thirteen and a half years then they cannot be living in the real world. During a five and a half week hearing in a Court of Appeal at the Old Bailey our claims of innocence were totally and without a shadow of a doubt presented in the evidence given by the witnesses called by our legal representatives. Sadly the truth and justice of our claims were rejected by the three Law Lords because to have admitted that six innocent men had been imprisoned for so long having been deliberately "fitted up" by the police would appear to be too much for the English Establishment to bear. . . .

So we are still enduring our wrongful imprisonment, but there is an old saying: "There is always someone worse off than yourself"; and bad though our position is, this saying is very true. . . .

The full text of this letter is available from: Justice & Development Officer, Christ Church, Mowl St. London SW9.

We have suffered at the hands of the police and on entering prison on the first day were brutally beaten by prison officers and have endured these long years in prison but we are alive and because of the strong love of our families and friends we have overcome the degrading and dehumanising conditions of our enforced imprisonment. Our sufferings are bad but are not to be compared to the horrific treatment the Nicaraguans endure at the hands of the rebels. They are continually in my prayers and I hope they are also in yours. In other places such as Chile and El Salvador the terrorism of the people comes not from the rebels but the armies and secret police of ruthless dictators who in their lust for power would appear to have lost all traces of humanity, if they ever had any. . . . I ask you to pray for justice for my friends and myself but not at the expense of your prayers and concern for the peoples of these countries where justice is non-existent. . . .

Being in prison does not indeed allow me much scope for "doing" things but I can pray and I do pray for all those who work so hard that justice may not be only a word but something that can be seen and enjoyed by all the peoples of the world.

May the peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Richard McIlkenny
April 1988

PRISON NEWS

The announcement that the Birmingham Six are finally "off the book" came as no surprise to the men and their families. The Six have not been subjected to full Category 'A' treatment for some years, although that has remained their official status. (The report in the October Newsletter was wrong in this respect.) Their decategorisation will make visits much easier to arrange, and will lift some of the petty restrictions that have governed their lives for the last fifteen years.

The news has also led to fears that the Government is trying to get British public opinion used to the idea that the men will be quietly released in the next year or two. The intention of the Home Office would be firstly to satisfy the more conservative, but conscience-stricken, sections of public opinion here and abroad, and, secondly, to take the steam out of the Campaign for the men's exoneration.

These fears may be justified. On January 22nd, the Home Office suggested - in a written answer to Chris Mullin - that the parole board will review the sentence in November 1991 (!): "Although life sentence prisoners were not eligible for parole, they could be released on life licence at the discretion of the Home Secretary if that was recommended by the board."

One curious feature of this elaborate exercise is the unusual silence of the "hang 'em and flog 'em" lobby in the media and in Parliament. Out of 37 "IRA" prisoners in England, only one other is Category 'B'. Yet the Six, according to this lobby, committed the biggest mass murder in British history. Where is their outrage over the Home Office going soft on terrorism?

The Campaign's view, and that of the men and their families, remains unchanged: the Birmingham Six are innocent. Their change of status is all but an acknowledgment of this. The only honest course of action for the authorities to follow now is to release the Birmingham Six and publicly exonerate them.



PRISON NEWS

"I cannot describe what it feels like to have everybody believe you are a mass murderer, when you are not. To be on show. To have all that hatred directed at you."

Hugh Callaghan

"It was the most awful weekend. First the bombs, and then suddenly the police arrive and arrest my Hughie, who never hurt anybody. We had never had anything to do with the police before and suddenly my house was full of them. The mood in Birmingham was so ugly. Imagine how I felt. It was the beginning of a nightmare which has never ended."

Eileen Callaghan.

(Quoted in the Independent 5.12.89)



What Price

- What price justice for the innocents, locked up in prison cells.
- What price respect and peace of mind, for those that know and will not tell.
- What price the horror of the beatings, the torture and the cries.
- Of honest men who in terror signed, perverted statements filled with lies,
- What price hunger and deprivation, threats with guns and growling dogs,
- Of minds now blank and wondering, as if lost within a fog.
- What price the cries of wives and children, of families torn apart,
- Whose moans and walls of anguish, comes from deeply wounded hearts.
- What price the long lost years, filled with loneliness and pain,
- The longing to be held, in loving arms again.
- What price the lost love and joy of children, "Love and joy" all now fully grown.
- Left without a father, now with children of their own.
- What price! What price!
- What price honesty and truthfulness, for dignity and pride to restore.
- For freedom, exoneration, recompense, to rejoin society once more.

RICHARD McILKENNY 18/11/89.

DON'T FORGET their BIRTHDAYS!

HUGH CALLAGHAN MAR 24
JOHN WALKER APR 15

"The people of Birmingham must be told the truth. Every day of my life that's what I look forward to, that's what keeps me going in this prison."

John Walker. Long Lartin. Christmas 1989.

RICHARD McILKENNY IN FULL SUITON



How they cope with life in British prisons

Mike Milotte on what helps the Birmingham Six deal with life behind bars

IN PRISON Richard McKenny has learned Spanish and Italian. He makes soft toys for family and friends, but spends most of his free time writing - poetry, much of it published, and letters to supporters worldwide. This Christmas he received over 1000 cards and hopes, eventually, to acknowledge all of them.

He is a deeply religious man and has been nicknamed "The Bishop" by fellow inmates. According to his wife Kate, he received the last rites eight years ago following a difficult operation for stomach ulcers.

Billy Power hates writing letters which is something of a drawback for a man who

receives so many. But he loves reading religious books, and gets greatest pleasure from a little magazine called *Horizon*, from his native Ardoyne in Belfast.

With degrees in sociology and religious studies - gained from prison - he is now studying for a qualification in computing.

"The eternal optimist," is how Gerry Conlon of the Guildford Four described Hugh Callaghan after visiting him last week at Long Lartin prison. Hugh is hopeful that the new evidence in the case, presented to the Home Office before Christmas, will result in freedom

with complete exoneration. "He looked really well and was in tremendous spirits," Gerry Conlon said.

But Hugh Callaghan suffers from an ulcer and the anxiety of prison life has caused him never-ending health problems. He takes little exercise and eats only prison food.

In letters to the *Sunday Tribune*, Hugh Callaghan says he intends writing a book about the Birmingham Six case and their experiences in prison. He is already a prolific writer of letters.

One of John Walker's few pleasures in prison is to buy a tin of fish and an onion from

the prison shop and make himself a fish curry on the cooker he shares with 75 other prisoners.

Despite his age and deteriorating eyesight, he still plays in goal in four-a-side prison football matches, and is a feared opponent at badminton.

"He is in remarkably good condition physically," according to Gerry Conlon who saw him for two-and-a-half hours at Long Lartin last week.

Gerry Conlon said Walker is "fairly optimistic" that the new evidence will bring release.

Gerard Hunter, whose sol-

icitor Gareth Pierce said he was in extremely poor health when she spoke in Dublin last November, was described by his wife Sandra and by Gerry Conlon, who visited him last week, as "looking very much better" recently after a period of depression, ill health and weight loss. Hunter has stopped smoking, was eating better and putting on weight.

Of the six prisoners, Gerard Hunter was the one on whom the ill-effects of incarceration showed most clearly.

After his conviction for the Birmingham pub bombings, Paddy Hill's weight fell from thirteen to eight stone and he suffered from depression.

His health deteriorated also following the refusal of the 1987 case appeal. Gerry Conlon, who visited him at Gartree prison last week, said he has put on a stone and a half in the last couple of months and was looking much better for it.

From his prison cell Paddy Hill has conducted the most active campaign to prove his innocence, and that of his five co-accused.

"Paddy, and the rest of them, see the Royal Prerogative of Mercy as no option," Gerry Conlon said. "They went into prison innocent men and they want to come out innocent men. They see a pardon as totally unacceptable."

THE GUILDFORD FOUR FREEDOM AFTER FIFTEEN YEARS

The campaign to free the Guildford Four was built on the courage of the prisoners and the tenacity of the relatives. In the beginning, in a climate of fear and intimidation, only a handful of people spoke out. Yet over the years a bedrock of support was built among Irish people which enabled the campaign to reach out on a global scale.

These few lines will never do justice to the thanks I want to express to all the people who campaigned on behalf of Gerry Paddy Carol and myself. The thousands of letters, cards sent by ordinary people from all over the world and the unwavering support from all over the world, special mention to my family and friends such as sister Sarah Clarke, which enabled me to retain my dignity and status as a human being. I now wish to live again and I ask you to lend your support to the Birmingham 6, so that they too, as innocent men can join me in freedom.

Paul Mc Hill

But there are still battles to win. The inquiry into the Guildford Four case set up under Sir John May could allow police officers and judges to give evidence behind closed doors, and it does not have the power to compel anyone to be questioned.

While individual police officers who were directly involved in interrogating the prisoners may eventually stand trial, others who have now reached very senior positions are unlikely to be made accountable. Unless the truth is made public, those responsible will not be brought to justice and the legal system which allows such abuses to continue will remain unchanged. This raises the spectre of yet more Irish people being framed.

Paul is still on bail for another conviction, based entirely on uncorroborated confession evidence obtained at the same time as his "confession" to the Guildford bombings. It is possible that he will have to remain on bail for eighteen months or more until the inquiry is completed.

The issues raised

The admission of the Four's innocence has brought home to many people the reality behind the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Paul Hill, the first person to be held under it, says: "I hope it will be abundantly clear that the Prevention of Terrorism Act was designed as a means of terrorising the Irish community in Britain." Commentators and leader writers have also been examining the implications of the case for the Appeal Court system, and some have even begun to question the adversarial nature of British trials. But change is a long way off.

NOW THE BIRMINGHAM SIX!

According to visitors the Birmingham Six are overjoyed at the release of the Four. Renewed media interest and the uncompromising public statements of Paul and Gerry have given the calls for the release of the Six new impetus.

From the Guildford 4 Campaign, 131, Eastgate Building, St John's Way, London. N19.

The fight continues

JOIN THE CAMPAIGN

please send off the coupon to:

The National Secretary, Birmingham Six Campaign, c/o Birmingham TUC, 7 Frederick Street, Birmingham B1 3HE.

THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE

BIRMINGHAM SIX

HAS NO

AIMS OR AGENDA

BEYOND

THE RELEASE AND

EXONERATION

OF

THE BIRMINGHAM SIX.

I/We would like to find out more about the Birmingham Six Campaign.
I/We would like to affiliate to the Campaign (£3 waged £1 unwaged £5 organisations)
I/We would like to donate the sum of £..... to the Campaign
(please delete as applicable)

Name.....

Address.....

.....