## Paddy Hill Bill Power Hugh Callaghan Dick McIlkenny John Walker From the Irish Post, 15 September 1984 WE ARE INNOCENT: HELP US I would like to thank the Irish Post for the publicity it has given us over the years. I write on behalf of the six innocent Irishmen who over the years and framed for the Birmingham pub bombings. Were tortured and framed for the Birmingham pub of the Since 1974, we have been protesting our innocence. One of the biggest obstacles we have had to contend with is the simple fact that we are Irish. For a number of years now I have been maintaining a For a number of years now I have been maintaining a letter-writing campaign with MPs, members of the House of Lords, journalists and other relevant persons or organisations. Lords, journalists and other relevant persons or organisations. Due to my persistence and the persistence of a small number of relatives and friends, we have finally got people to take an interest in our wrongful conviction and wrongful imprisonment. A number of organisations have started to campaign for the reopening of our case. I appeal to all Irish organisations in Pritain, as well as to individuals, to do what they can to seek justice for us. Justice for us. I repeat, we are six innocent men who have been wrongfully convicted. Please help us. PADDY HILL No. 509496 HM Prison Gartree, Market Harborough, Leicester LE16 7RP.

 $Photomontage: John \, Heartfield, \textit{Justicia}, 1933 \qquad Produced \, by \, the \, Troops \, Out \, Movement, PO \, Box \, 353, London \, NW5 \, 4NH \qquad Published \, by \, Information \, on \, Ireland, PO \, Box \, 958, London \, W14 \, OJF \, AND \, A$ 

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had beaten the men. Such admisgave detailed accounts of how they Granada TV's World in Action they defence lawyers and obtained by private statements made to the they had beaten the men. But in The warders denied in court that amazement they were acquitted. assaulting the men, and to general In 1976 14 warders were tried for

conld have been caused three or the injuries were recent, others who concluded that while some of examined by independent doctors, prison. Then three of the men were caused before they arrived at the their extensive injuries had been up for the warders, claimed that all who, transparently trying to cover examined first by the prison doctor, After this beating, the men were

appeared in court later that week. were clear to everybody when they left with marks on their faces which beaten by prison officers, and were On reception, they were viciously remanded to Winson Green prison. From the court, the men were

look... He had a very noticeable describe as a "wild" frightened and said, 'his eyes had what I would marks.' Curtis also saw John Walker his shoulders with diagonal scratch statement that Gerry Hunter's chest Solicitor Anthony Curtis said in a that the police had assaulted them. tors their injuries and complained men immediately showed the solicience of political cases. Some of the neither of whom had any experiduty solicitors from the court rota, November. They were assigned two on the morning of Monday 25 The six men were taken to court

warders on admission to Winson men were beaten again, this time by amination had been arranged, the were not, and before such an expolice custody. Unfortunately they medically examined before leaving indisputable if the men had been The evidence would have been

evidence of the police assaults. the judge chose to disbelieve the inadmissible in evidence. Instead, have had to rule the statements assaulted by the police, he would accepted that the men had been If at the trial Judge Bridge had

### TWO SETS OF BEATINGS

being in both pubs at the same situation where you have Hunter Hunter. You then have the ridiculous in the Town, says he did it with says that he also bombed the Tavern bombed it with Hill. Yet Walker, who in the Town, where he says that he account of who bombed the Tavern Дуви доп, ле вос мещквиид,

and makes no mention of Power saying that he did it with Hunter, own, but then you have Callaghan bombed the Mulberry Bush on his you've got Power saying that he tween themselves. For instance, "They were inconsistent as be-

solicitor Brian Rose-Smith exfour and Walker said three. As Callaghan said six, McIlkenny said er said there were seven bombs, how many bombs there were. Powplanted the various bombs, and of conflicting accounts of who had The statements gave hopelessly

cases were found in both pubs. D-shackles from the handles of in holdalls or suiteases, because indicated that the bombs had been scene of the bombings subsequently bag. But forensic reports from the bombings, which was in a plastic ingham, on the night of the pub bomb found in Hagley Road, Birmdents, and also with an unexploded fitted with previous bombing incibombs being in plastic bags. This The statements referred to the

evidence and they contradicted one They did not match the forensic themselves were unconvincing ter did not. The statements in Walker. Paddy Hill and Gerry Hun-McIlkenny, Bill Power and John statements - Hugh Callaghan, Dick Altogether four of the men signed

### FALSE 'CONFESSIONS'

but was still given no food till the broke down and signed a statement, well as extremely frightened. He Saturday he was in great pain as biscuit, so that by mid-day on the The police refused him even a which meant he needed to eat often. nervous disorder and an ulcer, years old and suffered from a home on the Friday night, was 44 Hugh Callaghan, arrested at his

name on a sheet of paper which I complete daze. I was told to sign my broke down completely. I was in a ched and slapped and eventually I frightened... I was constantly pun-My heart seemed to stop I was so thought for a moment I was dead. but this time the gun went off. I He repeated the performance,

gun and then said, "Next time it will to swear. He messed about with the nothing else happened. He started deliberately. There was a click, but He pulled the trigger slowly and me to sign the statement. I refused. length aiming at my heart. He asked room from me, He held it at arms standing at the other end of the took out the revolver. He was Dick McIlkenny remembered, W

very clear what I was doing'.

I remember signing, but it wasn't The beating continued while he them... I had no resistance left, and me and I was ordered to sign ment from me admitting the plant-

The papers were pushed in front of twisting others that I was saying.. some things that they were saying, bags and made me repeat after them claimed earlier on about plastic made me repeat what they had and started to take down notes and of daze. They started to question me state of terror and shock and a kind Dr Skuse came out of the office, B | thrown out. He recalled, I was in a window and threatened with being Bill Power was dragged to a

was being taken by car to Birming-

pulled the trigger. their homes and threatening their screaming mobs were surrounding with it. He put it into my mouth and with guns and dogs, and told that out his gun and hit me on the head cheon around the testicles... M took with the leather thong on the truntesticles and started whipping me rammed a truncheon up into my and to keep my legs wide apart. He told me to sit on the edge of the seat ham that Friday night. He said, 'B

All the men later made detailed

rived of food and sleep, threatened erely and repeatedly beaten, dep-They told how they had been sevstatements about their experience.

besuler I bas, and I refused.

-gelignite... They demanded a state-

confided from head to toe with

and other insults. They said I was

Irish bastard, c---, f--- pig, animal

were screaming at me, calling me an

slapping me all over my body. They

immediately, punching, kicking and

room and started beating me upor

and B pushed me into the same

Paddy Hill recalled, 'As soon as

on Saturday night. | lasted from Friday morning till late

of brutality and humiliation which They subjected the men to an ordeal signed 'confessions' at all costs. were now determined to obtain the men were in the IRA. The police firmed the police in their view that on Friday 22 November 1974, con-Dr Skuse's forensic results, early

### POLICE BRUTALITY

Dr Caddy also obtained the same

cards and cigarette packets. such as leatherette, picture postwith nitrocellulose on their surface, result from tests on other objects

explosive nitroglycerine. result was the same as for the shuffled cards, and in both cases the Griess-tested playing cards, and the cards on the train to Heysham. He the traces while they were playing the men could also have acquired Caddy went on to demonstrate that nitrocellulose traces from paint. Dr

forensic science at Strathclyde Unidock and Dr Brian Caddy, head of Office forensic scientist David Ballycerine. They were former Home result in the Griess test as nitrogcent substances could give the same scientists to find out whether inno-

Ten years later, Granada TV's





### DNAHDNINAIG THE CASE OF THE

explosives.

response to the Griess test as

packets will produce the same

picture postcards and cigarette

from playing cards, leatherette,

have proved that samples

Scientists

by trade, and could have acquired listed nitrocellulose, which is comdence against them were painters nitroglycerine. Among these he the same result in the Griess test as The two men with forensic eviof other substances would produce

Thus Dr Skuse's evidence was test to the explosive nitroglycerine. give identical results in the Griess substance nitrocellulose did indeed entists found that the common Working independently, both sci-

tests failed to produce decisive nitroglycerine. Other more sensitive been in contact with the explosive World in Action commissioned two

discounted that of Dr Black. believed Dr Skuse's evidence and Bridge (now a Lord) told the jury he railway and bar furniture. But Judge and varnishes regularly used on monly found in the paints, lacquers

that Paddy Hill and Bill Power had From his results Skuse concluded test, a preliminary screening test. The first of these was the Griess swabs and carried out a series of arrived at Morecambe. He took a Home Office forensic scientist, ing the 'bombers') Dr Frank Skuse, police announced they were holdthe morning (some hours after the questioning. In the early hours of

At the trial, Dr Hugh Black, a

After being stopped as they men had been beaten into signing evidence was worthless and that the defence case was that the forensic tody by four of the men. The sions' signed while in police cus-Frank Skuse, and, secondly, confessupplied by a forensic scientist, Dr dence against two of the men prosecution case were, firstly, evi-The two main planks of the

cambe police station for further

men were asked to go to More-

boarded the ferry at Heysham, the

### **FORENSIC TESTS**

handing round plastic bags in the found. No witnesses saw the men bomb-making materials or firearms clothes or luggage. Nor were any found in the men's homes or in their place. No traces of explosives were Anger prints in any incriminating immediate vicinity. There were no of the bombed pubs or in the identify any of these men in either But there were no witnesses to boarded the train.

bar after which five of them bombs, then returned to the station They then went off and planted the amongst themselves in plastic bags. There they had distributed bombs had met in New Street station bar absurdity. The six men, they said, that was unlikely to the point of The police put forward a scenario

associated with IRA prisoners. imprisonment the men have never of the movement, and since their have denied the men were members from the start serior Republicans vities centred on pubs. Further, were expressed through social actirepublican sympathies, but these North of Ireland, some of them had Like many Catholics from the bers of Sinn Fein.

t about 8.20 pm on Thursday | 11 and 27 years. None were mem-

all had lived in England for between all were married with children and were aged between 29 and 44 years; group to form an IRA unit. They But the men were an unlikely

for the defence. He said that a range sives for the Home Office, testified ings were carried out in revenge for former Chief Inspector of Exploalso a member, and that the bomban IRA unit of which McDade was countination. 1975, was that the men were part of the trial in Lancaster Castle in June

The police's theory, presented to

### **UNLIKELY STORIES**

returned home that night. local. He was arrested when he spending the evening drinking at his Friday, he remained in the area, before going home. The next day, seeing them off, he visited two pubs couldn't raise the money. After Callaghan: he had planned to go but

Also at the station was Hugh Birmingham's New Street station. from local nuns. The five met in Paddy Hill borrowed some money ing the money to go. In the end unemployed and had difficulty raisnised. Three of the men were The trip was haphazardly orga-

funeral was an excuse for a visit Birmingham pubs. Besides, the McDade was a popular singer in three had been at school with him: Belfast as McDade, Ardoyne, and came from the same small area of as political reasons. Four of them McDade's funeral for social as much In fact, the men were going to had the 'bombers'.

jumped to the conclusion that they discovered their destination, they change in Coventry. When the police when bombing a telephone exblown himself up the previous week McDade, an IRA volunteer who had their way to the funeral of James boat at about 11 pm. They were on ped by police when boarding the Power and John Walker were stop-Gerry Hunter, Dick McIlkenny, Bill to Ireland at Heysham. Paddy Hill, Thursday evening to catch the ferry ham on the 7.55 pm train that the Birmingham Six' left Birming-Five of the men now known as

the men primarily responsible. they were satisfied that they had got Midlands force told the press that bombing senior officers of the West body', and within five hours of the under great pressure to 'get someparticularly high. The police were and feelings in Birmingham ran ing was one of horror and outrage, The public response to the bomb-

162 were injured. Iwenty-one people were killed and but much too late to be effective. telephone warning had been given, Bush and the Tavern in the Town. A Birmingham, the Mulberry ni exploded in two pubs in 21 November 1974 bombs

'I do agree that there are grave reasons for doubting the verdict which was given against you, and I would give support to any campaign to reopen your case.' **Lord Gifford QC** 

sions suggest that the statements

were true.

These statements also list the injuries that were already on the men's bodies on admission to prison. One prison officer said, 'The prisoner's torso was more or less covered with bruises... they were all colours and most of them looked oldish.' Another said the men's bodily markings 'were consistent with a systematic beating below the

neck while in police custody.' Further evidence came from Dr David Paul, a world authority in forensic medicine, who examined sets of photographs taken of the men while they were in police custody and then in prison custody. He told World in Action that he was 'completely confident' that they had been injured before leaving police custody, and had subsequently sustained further injuries.

### YEARS OF CAMPAIGNING

The six men were convicted at Lancaster Crown Court on 15 August 1975. Each was given 21 life sentences. They applied to the Court of Appeal for leave to challenge their convictions, but on 30 March 1976 this was refused. Lord Widgery, sitting with two other judges, said there was nothing 'unsafe or unsatisfactory' about their convictions

In November 1977 the men tried to sue the police for assaulting them. Their action was stopped by Lord Denning in the Court of Appeal in January 1980. Upholding an appeal by the West Midlands and Lancashire police against the men's action, Lord Denning made an extraordinary statement:

'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 that the Home Secretary would have either to recommend that they be pardoned or he would have to remit the case to the Court of Appeal. This is such an appalling vista that every this does not happen, and that these sensible person in the land would six innocent men are freed from say: "It cannot be right that these | their living nightmare.

actions should go any further." They should be struck out In essence, Lord Denning was

saying that the action had to be stopped because the men might win, and the consequences of this were too 'appalling' to be allowed to The case was then taken to the

House of Lords, where in October 1981 Lord Diplock confirmed Lord Denning's decision. A few days later Paddy Hill began a hunger strike which lasted 42 days.

Following the World in Action programme in October 1985, Sir John Farr, Conservative MP for the district which includes Gartree prison where Paddy Hill is incarcerated, submitted a dossier of new evidence to the Home Secretary, who alone has the power to re-open the



Sir John Farr MF

case. 'The Home Secretary should certainly hold a retrial,' said Farr. His call has been supported by a number of prominent people including the Bishops of Derry, Down and Conor, and Galway, and John Hume

At the time of writing, Home Secretary Douglas Hurd's decision is not yet known. If he decides to re-open the case, there is still no guarantee that justice will be done. As things stand, in Paddy Hill's words, 'We are more or less conde-

mned to die in prison. Please do all you can to ensure

Name: Power HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs 16 September 1975

... Did you hear the joke on the news and in the papers last week? Amnesty International was complaining about Russia, South Africa, Chile and Uganda, and the news media was also giving them some stick about torturing people to obtain confessions, when it's happening under their noses! There is no justice. Everybody needs

Billy

### What you can do

 Write to Rt. Hon. Douglas Hurd MP, The Home Secretary, **House of Commons, London SW1A OAA** □ Write to Noel Dorr, Irish Ambassador, Irish Embassy, 17

**Grosvenor Place, London SW1X 7HR** 

☐ Write to your MP

☐ Ask your trade union branch, political party or other organisation to take immediate action. Make sure resolutions are forwarded to the Home Secretary and the Irish Ambassador. Please also send a copy to the Troops Out Movement or to Information on Ireland, who will forward it to the prisoners. ■ Write to the national and local papers and phone your local

☐ Organise or support activities taking place in your area.

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bombing, Tribune, 10 September 1982 Chris Mullin, The Birmingham Bombings: Did the police get the right culprits?, Tribune, 14 October 1977

Proops Out Movement, Frame-ups: The case of the Birmingham Six, available

### from T.O.M., PO Box 353, London NW5 4NH, for 10p + s.a.e. New book

Chris Mullin, Error of Judgement: The Birmingham Bombings, Chatto & Windus, £10.95

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Pre-prison photos courtesy of Granada TV.

# BIRINGHAM 6





**Dick Mollkenny** 



'The Home Secretary should certainly hold a retrial.' Sir John Farr, Conservative MP for Harborough

ix Birmingham Irishmen have been in jail since 1974 for offences they did not commit. The suffering and bitter frustration they and their families have borne is incalculable. Unless massive public pressure is brought to bear, they will spend the rest of their lives in prison.

Hugh Callaghan, Paddy Hill, Gerry Hunter, Dick McIlkenny, Bill Power and John Walker were arrested in November 1974 in the wave of outrage that followed the bombing of two pubs in Birmingham. Twenty-one people were killed in the bombings, and 162 were injured. Anti-Irish feeling was fierce, and the Labour government took the opportunity to rush through the Prevention of Terrorism Act, which then Home Secretary Roy Jenkins described as 'draco-

The six were long-time Birmingham residents, working class men with families. Five were arrested within hours of the bombing as they boarded a boat for a short visit to Ireland. Forensic tests, which have since been conclusively discredited, suggested that two of them might have handled explosives. The men were savagely and repeatedly beaten by the police during two days of interrogation, and four of them signed false 'confessions'. The 'confessions' contradicted each other and did not match the evidence from the scene. The six were nevertheless convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment.

The six men were victims of hysteria and vengeance, not recipients of justice. They were convicted because they were Irish and in the wrong place at the wrong time. They, and their families, have consistently proclaimed their innocence. Please help

to set them free!

**POSTER/MAGAZINE 60p** 



**Hugh Callaghan** 



**Bill Power** 



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