

Birmingham Six

Glasgow Committee 1990

P.McAleer

17/09/2011

The Irish Community and friends in Glasgow rallied to the cause of righting the injustice suffered by the Birmingham Six. The initial work was done by Danny Gallagher who singlehandedly got in touch with the Churches in Glasgow and distributed leaflets and the Petition.

The official campaign was launched in 1990 and a Committee established with Joe Mc Elhone as Chairman.

It is obvious from the list of supporters on the leaflet below that the Committee was contacting many influential voices in Scotland. A committee was also established in St Andrews Teacher Training College in Bearsden. Talks were held in many Universities and contact made with the STUC and the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission. Cardinal Winning issued a strong Statement in support of the men about Christmas time.

GLASGOW SUPPORTERS

2200 Glaswegians and visitors to Glasgow have signed the Glasgow Charter calling for the release and exoneration of the Birmingham Six. Supporters of the Glasgow Charter for the Birmingham Six include :-

Stuart Bates, GDC Councillor; Jo Beddoe, 784 Theatre Company; Billy Bragg, Musician; Arnold Brown, Comedian; Bill Butler, GDC Councillor; Maggie Chetty, Strathclyde Community Relations Council; Ken Collins, M.E.P.; Tom Conti, Actor; Stuart Cosgrove, Writer and TV producer; Don Coultis, TV Director; Danny Crawford, GDC Councillor; Justin Currie, Del Amitri; Deacon Blue, Musicians; Edward Devine, GDC Councillor; Michael Donnelly, Museum Curator; Owen Dudley Edwards, Historian; Winnie Ewing, M.E.P.; Fergus Ewing, SNP Home Affairs Spokesman; Brian Fitzpatrick, Solicitor; Larry Flannigan, GDC Councillor; Maria Fyfe, M.P.; George Galloway, M.P.; Dick Gaughan, Musician; Charles Gordon, SRC Councillor; Alasdair Gray, Author; David Hayman, 784 Theatre Company; James', Musicians; Arthur Johnstone, Musician; Gerard Kelly, Actor/Director; James Kelman, Author; Jim Kerr, Musician; Elspeth King, Museum Curator; Austin Lafferty Senior, Solicitor; Brian Lanigan, Solicitor; Martin Lavery, Solicitor; Tom Leonard, Poet; John Macauley, Solicitor; Clir MacKachnie, SRC Councillor; Bernard MacLavererty, Writer; M MacLean, SRC Councillor; Walter MacLellan, SRC Councillor; Donna McKinnon, President N.U.S. Scotland; McLuskie Bros, Musicians; Jim McVicar, GDC Councillor; Michael Miller, SRC Councillor; Edwin Morgan, Author; Alex Morrison, GDC Councillor; Ken Murray, SRC Councillor; Brian Oldrey, SRC Councillor; Laura Reilly, Solicitor; Craig Robertson, GDC Councillor; M E Scott, Solicitor; Clare Short, M.P.; Jim Sillars, M.P.; Vincent Smith, Solicitor; Elaine C Smith, Actress; Charles Stevenson, GDC Councillor; Mike Watson, M.P.; Kara Wilson, Writer; Jimmy Wray, M.P.

The families of the Birmingham Six have issued an urgent appeal for money to cover the costs of the appeal for the men and their families. 'We're not convinced that the Director of Public Prosecutions will not contest the appeal. The last appeal lasted six weeks and almost bankrupted the campaign. We're not complacent. We still have a long way to go and compensation - even if they do get it - will take months. PLEASE HELP.'

GLASGOW CHARTER for the BIRMINGHAM Six 16 STOLEN YEARS

'English justice stands indicted at the bar of international opinion in its treatment of the Birmingham Six. No Irishman can hope for a fair trial in England.'
Winnie Ewing, M.E.P.

'Until the day the Birmingham Six walk free, the words British justice form a contradiction in terms.'
Mike Watson, M.P. Glasgow Central.

BIRMINGHAM 6 THE FACTS

- 21/11/74 21 people killed by 2 bombs in Birmingham
- 21/11/74 6 Irish men arrested in Heysham and Birmingham. Forensic tests carried out by Dr Skuse in Morecombe Police Station. Following 'positive' results on 2 men, all 6 received severe beatings in Morecombe and Birmingham Queens Road Police Stations. Four of the Birmingham Six make contradictory confessions under violence and threats of violence.
- 24/11/74 Six transferred to Winsan Green Prison, beaten by prison officers
- Aug 1975 Six convicted of Birmingham pub bombings and sentenced to life imprisonment
- Mar 1976 Refused leave to appeal
- Jun 1976 14 prison officers tried for assault against the Birmingham Six. All 14 acquitted following defence evidence that the Six had already been beaten when in police custody
- Nov 1977 Application by the Birmingham Six to sue the West Midlands Police for assault
- Jan 1980 Lord Denning, 2nd most senior English judge, upholds police appeal preventing the civil assault case, clearly stating his determination that no jury should re-examine the Birmingham Six case in case this might damage public confidence in English justice
- Oct 1985 Dr Skuse forced to retire due to 'limited efficiency' following a Granada TV report discrediting his forensic methods
- Nov 1987 Court of Appeal hears the case
- Jan 1988 Appeal Court upholds the convictions rejecting new defence evidence from several police witnesses. In the aftermath of the loss of the appeal, the National Campaign is set up
- Jun 1989 West Midlands Serious Crime Squad disbanded following evidence of fabrication of confessions in several cases between 1986 and 1988. Of the 26 Serious Crime Squad officers who had direct contact with the Birmingham Six, at least 17 have been involved in other cases where defendants claim they were framed or forced into making confessions. In 5 cases these claims have been proved in Court. The Birmingham Six campaign for the police inquiry to be backdated to include their case
- Oct 1989 Guildford Four released by the Court of Appeal after 15 years imprisonment when the Director of Public Prosecutions decides not to contest their case. Their convictions declared 'unsafe'. May Inquiry set up to investigate the Guildford Four and Maguire cases
- Aug 1990 Home Secretary Waddington refers the case to the Department of Public Prosecutions

COULD IT HAPPEN IN SCOTLAND?

Yes. There are differences between the Scottish and English criminal justice systems whereby in England evidence by way of confession alone can convict, but in Scotland normally there has to be additional independent evidence against the accused (corroboration). In recent years however, the Scottish Courts have convicted on 'special knowledge' confessions alone. These are confessions containing details supposedly only the perpetrator or the police would know. In this way the forced and faked confessions of the Guildford Four and Birmingham Six could have convicted them in Scotland. Indeed there is less protection for accused in police stations in Scotland compared to England where there is a Code of Conduct for the police. Civil liberties and principles of Scottish criminal law are being eroded by the introduction of new laws and recent court decisions. As a result miscarriages of justice are on the increase.

WRITE TO THE MEN

Billy Power
Richard McKenny
Patrick Hill
Gartree Prison, Leicestershire Road, Market Harborough, Leics, LE1 7RP
Gerry Hunter
John Walker
Hugh Callaghan
Long Lartin Prison, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcs WR11 5TZ

AFFILIATE TO THE CAMPAIGN

Write to Glasgow Committee, National Campaign for the Birmingham Six c/o Clyde Books 19 Parnie Street Glasgow G1 5RJ

Cost Groups £10
individuals £3
unwaged £1

Mass
for Justice
for the
Birmingham
Six

st. Mungo's church
MONDAY 17th DEC - 7.30pm.
- FR. G. HANID.
ORGANIZED BY JUSTICE•PEACE

Hand Written! No Fancy computers then.



Irish Céilí Night in The Couper Institute 1990. Some of the Birmingham Six Ctee. L –R Harry Wallace, Sean O Ciarain (originally from Mayo and Author of 'Farewell to Mayo'), Joe McElhone and Pat McAleer.

The Céilí was a sell out and Music was by Jimmy McHugh's renowned 'Four Provinces Céilí Band.

MASS FOR THE BIRMINGHAM SIX: ST. MUNGO'S 17-12-90

Entrance:

Alleluia, alleluia,
give thanks to the risen Lord,
alleluia, alleluia,
give praise to his name.

1. Jesus is Lord of all the earth.
He is the King of creation.
2. Spread the good news o'er all the the earth.
Jesus has died and is risen.
3. We have been crucified with Christ.
Now we shall live for ever.
4. God has proclaimed the just reward
life for all people, alleluia.
5. Come, let us praise the living God,
joyfully sing to our Saviour.



Communion:

1. Be still, and know I am with you,
be still, I am the Lord.
I will not leave you orphans.
I leave you with my world. Be one.
2. You fear the light may be fading,
you fear to lose your way.
Be still, and know I am near you.
I'll lead you to the day and the sun.
3. Be glad the day you have sorrow,
be glad, for then you live.
The stars shine only in darkness,
and in your need I give my peace.



Exit:

1. Let there be love shared among us,
let there be love in our eyes;
may now your love sweep this nation,
cause us O Lord, to arise!
Give us a fresh understanding of
family love that is real.
Let there be love shared among us,
Let there be love!
2. Let there be hope.....
3. Let there be joy.....
4. Let there be faith.....

