



# Quaker Peace & Service

Representative

A department of London Yearly Meeting and of Ireland Yearly Meeting  
of the Religious Society of Friends

Quaker House, 7 University Avenue, Belfast BT7 1GX

Telephone  
(0232) 249293

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John Alderdice  
Alliance Party of N.I.  
88 University Street  
Belfast BT7 1HE

Dear John,

First of all, happy Christmas to you. I hope you've had some time to relax with your family, and get away from your usual day-to-day involvements. However, the rest of this letter will deal with the usual sort of thing, so don't read on until you're officially back at work.

As you will realise, we have some involvement in prisons issues, both out of interest, and because Quakers run visitors' centres and pre-release programmes at the prisons. I don't normally intervene, or ask others to intervene, in the cases of individual prisoners. However, I am now passing along for your consideration something that has come to me.

The prisoner concerned is a lifer called H. G. Liggett (called Guffer), who is at Maghaberry. I think he has already written to you about his situation, and I have been asked to bring it to your attention. He has been recommended for release by the Life Sentence Review Board; his case is presently at the judiciary for consultation. It is likely that he will be released, and he is worried about his tattoos. (Yes, that's what I said: tattoos.) He has lots of them, but most he's content to keep covered. The ones that worry him are on his hands and knuckles, where he really can't expect to wear clothing. And, as you will have guessed, the tattoos include initials of organisations (in this case, Loyalist ones) and other things that he thinks will endanger him when he is out. He wants to have them removed before release, but the cost is prohibitively high. There is apparently some provision for removal of tattoos through national health, if one's life is endangered, which he believes his to be. You understand that this is not a medical danger, but nonetheless a real one, at least to him. Would you be willing, in your combined political and psychiatric capacity, to talk with the medical officer at the prison about this? I understand that the medical officer might be willing to support Guffer's petition to have this covered by national health, but he would need support from someone else, as well. The medical officer is called Dr. Borlan; the phone number at Maghaberry (0846) 611888.

Thanks, John, for reading to the end of this, at least. With any luck, this will be the oddest request I bring to you. I suppose constituency requests must come in all sorts of forms, and politicians are tempted to collect the most bizarre for a television series like the one about the veterinarian.

Thank you.

*Sue Williams*