**Representation 3**

**From *Militant Suffragettes* written by Antonia Raeburn, published in 1973.**

Suffragette militancy was not carried out in a spirit of random destruction. In every instance of arson the manoeuvre was carefully considered and planned before volunteers took any steps. Human life was sacred and the WSPU ruled that ‘not a cat, dog or canary should be harmed’’, and this rule was miraculously upheld without any known exception.

Many of the clergy were now behind the movement and they saw Christabel’s point of view that there is violence which is righteous as well as violence which is unrighteous. Terrible reports of forcible feeding had been given by the released prisoners. The medical profession publicly denounced forced feeding and the Bishop of London wrote in *The Times*: ‘We are not justified in treating delicate women in this way. The process seems to leave them physical and mental wrecks which no Christian civilisation should allow.’

During a debate in the House on militancy, McKenna said that they had to deal with a phenomenon absolutely without precedent in our history. The sympathy of the respectable classes was so great that the work of the police was heavily handicapped.

All proposed solutions proved impracticable. McKenna said that the women would be prepared to die and one martyrdom would bring on a host more. ‘Coupled with their hysterical fanaticism they have a courage that stands at nothing.’ He appealed to the press not to give headlines to militant acts, and if possible not to report at all.

There were complaints from non-militants that suffragists received no publicity. The *Daily Graphic* then devoted a page each day to articles by members of all non-militant suffrage groups. The extremists had at last succeeded in forcing the general public to consider the whole problem.