

AN EOCHAIR

THE KEY TO TRUE FREEDOM -
SOCIALISM

Number 13

Price: 5p



A BULLETIN OF THE IRISH REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT, LONG KESH

New Address

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STRIP SEARCHES REJECTED

There has always been a certain indigenous atmosphere prevalent in Long Kesh. Even when this area was just an old, disused airfield local people would tell you of a strange and inexplicable feeling one would have while passing through.

As conditions in the Six Counties, and the situation generally, deteriorated. Long Kesh suddenly became earmarked for use as a concentration camp.

From that day the atmosphere of the Long Kesh area changed from the inexplicable to a very real and explicable 'feeling' of... repression and subjugation.

Throughout the history of this camp such feelings have been manifested in one form or another by the prisoners. This usually meant direct confrontation with the establishment.

Of late that atmosphere of repression and subjugation has become more acute. Due to the following:

Some time ago we were informed by the Prison Establishment that strip searches would be re-introduced. The Long Kesh Authorities explained that such a decision was a directive from the NIO and that, as far as they were concerned, they were opposed to it, especially in the prevailing climate at Long Kesh.

Due to subsequent discussion the 'authorities' decided that only 10% of each cage would be strip searched. This they said was in parity with Magilligan. And they added that the strip search procedure had been in operation at Magilligan for some time. Hadn't we, they asked, always called for parity.

It should be noted that the strip-search had been in operation prior to the conflagration of October 1974. Following this, such a procedure was no longer used.

However recently in Long Kesh there has been a tightening-up process during searches. These methods proved quite adequate and on 'security grounds' there was no need to re-introduce strip-searches.

What we must ask ourselves is why, at this point in time, does the NIO direct the re-introduction of this procedure, especially when one takes into consideration the phasing out of Political Status. Since Ree's announced his intention to phase out Political Status, the issue has been to the forefront of our minds.

The response to such an announcement has led to various intransigent and entrenched positions being adopted by the Establishment and opposing groups.

Confrontation seems inevitable. Discuss-

ion and dialogue have been pushed to one side. The NIO embarked upon a campaign to denigrate and humiliate the political prisoners. Some of the 'Black' propaganda issued under various names by the NIO and fellow travellers reflects a vindictive and unconstructive attitude.

It was in the light of such possible confrontation, on this issue, both inside and out, that we questioned the motivation behind the re-introduction of strip searches.

Was such a policy directed to precipitate any possible action or campaign of action, within the prison on the status issue?

Was such a directive not another devious and subtle attempt by the NIO to pre-empt the inevitable confrontation?

To pre-empt such a confrontation would mean that resistance would be dissipated before the real issue was settled. Such would be the advantage for the NIO.

But again maybe the NIO wanted to create a certain instability inside the prisons; maybe the NIO wanted a certain response from the prisoners.

Maybe they wanted food thrown over the wire, sheets torn and even possibly Prison Officers killed.

In turn the NIO would use such destruction and possible deaths in their campaign to denigrate and criminalise the activities of the political prisoners. The NIO then could put forward what would seem rational propaganda, about for instance their parole scheme, issue elaborate and sumptuous menus; announce the cost of damage to laundry and other equipment; and then state that it has been replaced or repaired. In other words present themselves in the light of hard-working and honest reformers, doing their best for hopeless, bloody men.

This kind of propaganda only serves to mislead and confuse the public, and obscure the fact that we are the victims of a corrupt state.

By calling political prisoners criminals and thugs, the NIO hope to isolate the mass of the people from the prisoners, indeed to defuse the whole political crisis in the Six Counties.

What cannot be forgotten is that some groups, in order to achieve their own particular ends, shall use the platform of repression to create a particular response from their own supporters.

Emotional and evocative issues propagated with well chosen phrases and clichés, are always sure to provoke a reaction from certain sections of the community. However the

use of such tactics are sometimes used to cloud the real motivations of the instigators.

It must be remembered that certain happenings relating to Long Kesh cannot be understood in isolation from the events in the rest of the Six Counties. If your main base of support lies outside prison, and if certain issues become contentious and demand action, inside prison, then it is only natural that you will turn to your main base of support.

In the course of supporting that prison issue, the activities of the group will effect the whole political climate of the Six Counties. With the present situation such activities can only worsen the already stagnating situation.

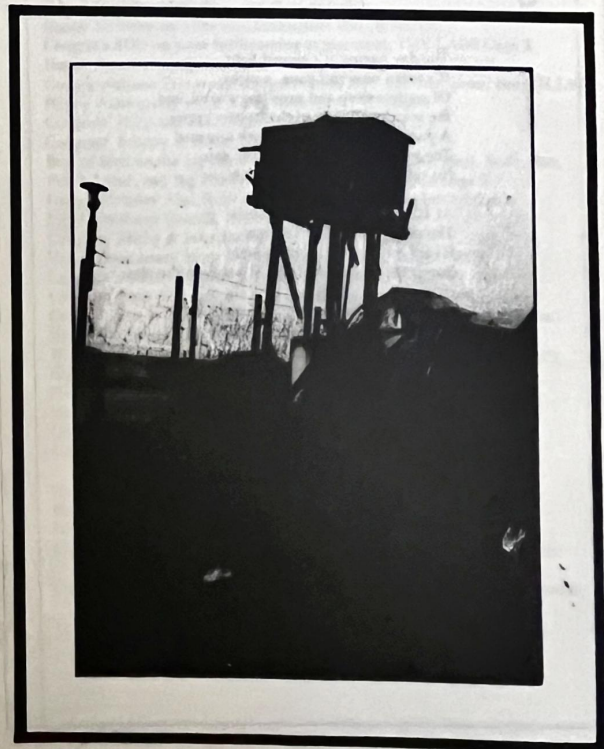
Therefore in Long Kesh today we have a constantly changing situation. The catalyst

effect of the strip searches has limited the possible opportunities of resolving the whole question of political status. The status question is an integral factor of the Ireland crisis today, and cannot be dissolved in such an arbitrary fashion.

If peace and stability are to return to the Six Counties then this cannot be done by military means. The solution can only come through dialogue and discussion involving all progressive groups within the community.

In this respect discussion on the Political Status issue should be initiated forthwith. Only through such a realistic approach to the problem will a solution be found.

Only through such an approach to our problems can the atmosphere at Long Kesh return to its former strange and inexplicable state.



EDUCATION IS A RIGHT

Despite NIO propaganda, floated occasionally, to the effect that the 'Maze' (where ever or whatever that is!) is particularly well catered for educationwise, the so-called system of academic education presently offered to prisoners in Long Kesh is so disjointed and frivolous that it is devoid of any possible meaning.

Virtually nothing has been done since it was introduced back in 1973, to give the system muscle. In spite of numerous proposals and suggestions from the prisoners, submitted to both the Prison administration and the NIO, all serious problems have been casually swept under the mat.

And instead of any real attempt to rectify the situation, we witness yet further problems created by the introduction of even more petty restrictions.

Communication and dialogue on the subject, has been abruptly terminated by the Establishment, for reasons best known to the Establishment. This head in the sand mentality can only lead to further frustration and accelerate the collapse of Prison sponsored education schemes.

The inadequacies of the system were borne out recently, by the case of two prisoners taking correspondence courses in typing. The prisoners had to abandon the courses because they were not allowed typewriters. We even offered to provide our own typewriters, but 'not an inch' was the cry from the screws bunk.

No reasonable explanation was ever given for this refusal - perhaps if we had pushed the issue, some obscure 'security' regulation would have been quoted.

With other 'similar' correspondence courses; History or English for example, one might imagine that the problems encountered would also be similar. You would imagine things take great time coming through but text books and reference material are sometimes never seen. Even when all the necessary material has been acquired the toughest hurdle has yet to be negotiated. Although a tutor is provided with each course to direct and assist the student, his/her expert advice is often futile and wasted. Chiefly because the relationship between teacher and student is superficial, impersonal and disjointed with assignments taking up to six weeks to return to the

prisoner. On top of this all correspondence is subject to censorship, and this in itself is a great hindrance: the prisoner will be very reluctant to discuss his problems knowing that some screw will read about them. Thus the correspondence system, although it has certain uses, is in itself totally inadequate.

Although these courses do cover a wide academic area, the attitude of the establishment on the issue of trade union courses, has led us to question just how wide or comprehensive the facilities offered are. All applications for such courses, have to date, fell on deaf ears.

Another feature of the system is the part-time classes. These like the courses are a farce. They are a waste of time, energy and public money. They are arranged in such a way that a teacher comes into the compound once per week for all of an hour. Due to the short period of time allowed, the teacher will rush through as much information as he can, usually without much success. These classes are further rendered useless by the utter lack of reference material and by the presence of an observer - an observer is a screw, clocking up about 18 hours, and snoring during the class.

A third feature is the so-called documentary films. These as one might think, are in no way related to courses being taken, such as Geography, or mathematics, but propaganda films churned out by the multi-national 'Shell'. This money wasted on this nonsense could be much more profitably spent.

Lastly there is the question of outside study huts (outside the cage that is). These huts are essential for men engaged in serious study, and indeed are easily accessible, yet despite agreement from the establishment, no permission to use the studyhuts was readily granted, and mysteriously withdrawn. As a consequence they have lain idle for almost a year.

On the whole it would appear that education is to continue to remain outside the grasp of those people who occupy the social position of the working class in society. In other words it is to be used as a class weapon by the ruling clique.

Our position on this is clear: education is a right not a privilege!

We, the Republican Prisoners, Long Kesh, demand an immediate reappraisal of the education system as presently constituted at the prison. We demand full access to the outside study-huts. The provision of full time teachers and study aids, including reference films. The removal of 'observers' from classes and greater facilities for the part time teachers generally, and the provision of Trade Union correspondence courses.

Just Another Day

The day begins; it's almost light.
It's seven now and gone a night,
Of restless sleep and prowling screws,
and the searching lights of the 'copter crews.
A patrolling Brit his dog then screams!
The vans for court come in the gate.
No time for tea or you'll be late.

At 12 o'clock the dinner comes
The greasy spuds to line tums
Placed on paper it looks so great
But at the end of the meal, it's still on the plate.

But when called to a visit anyway
The screws they listen to what you say,
No privacy at all for anyone,
An example of how Long Kesh is run.

From food to visits and on to sports,
Football, handball there are all sorts,
In sports equipment things are scarce,
And by the look of things are getting worse.

It's almost nine and already dark,
The Brits patrol their dogs they bark;
The outlined posts in the evening sky,
Long Kesh is quiet, another day goes by.

LONG KESH MENU- COOK OFF!

The British are expert at most things, or so they would like us to believe. Not least of their achievements is their accumulate knowledge on the subject of food and of its relationship to the human body.

After the burning of Long Kesh, the 'authorities' in their relentless pursuit of the perfect constructed, so they tell us, the most modern and expensive kitchens in Europe.

These kitchens were built for two reasons, allegedly to feed us, but primarily to further human insight into the workings of the human body.

Unknown to us at the time, we were to be guinea pigs in the service of science. When the findings will be made public, we simply don't know. At the risk of letting the cat out of the bag, we believe it is the duty of this paper to inform the populace of the extent of these historic experiments.

First of all, as we all know, breakfast is the most important meal of the day. To see how the body can cope without this meal, we aren't surprised with any!

Next is dinner - we think - . This is sent up at irregular intervals. With time we have

learned that, at any time between 11.15am and 2.30pm without pressing any buttons or creating any undue fuss, the compositional pans will open, and in will roll a trolley stacked with organic matter, in various usually advanced states of decomposition.

Sometimes the actual content is unknown to us.

Sometimes we even threw it over the wall. But we soon learned the futility of such action, as invariably, the Brits would be watching with their best friends who proceeded to gobble up the lot. Once we had a nasty shock when three of these dogs dropped dead!

Their owners were summarily discharged for cruelty to animals, and sent packing to fight the red menace haunting Angles.

For tea the staple diet is 'chips' we don't know what they're chips of but they're definitely chips. For dessert we receive custard and a sickly grey-yellow substance called apple crumble, this concoction is generally laced with wire wool and snit-bits of tin hence the nickname apple-tin crumble.

To come out of Long Kesh of normal proportion would be a miracle, and as you know miracles are not allowed - on any grounds.

PAROLE: THE FACTS

On Sunday 1st August the Northern Ireland Office issued a press statement announcing that a weeks summer parole had been granted to 230 prisoners, presently incarcerated in Northern Ireland goals.

These prisoners, the statement continues, were selected, long term prisoners, serving their first sentence and in the later stage of that sentence; that of the 230 prisoners selected 192 were special category (Political) prisoners.

Further, that 223 prisoners had been allowed home leave at Christmas and that this system was unique in the U.K.

To the uninitiated such a statement can only reflect a progressive and magnanimous attitude on the part of the NIO. However, to the initiated such an ambiguous statement reflects and epitomises, in all its totality, the inability or refusal of the NIO bureaucrats to implement a proper and constructive home leave scheme.

We the Republican Prisoners in Long Kesh, would contend that the present schemes both Christmas and summer are divisive, discriminatory and totally incongruous with contemporary prison reform.

Such observations are not matters of conjecture but are based on facts and figures, collected over the years, relating to those Republican prisoners eligible for semi-yearly parole and those who actually received it.

Added to this, we have, on occasions, had certain platitudes expressed to us by leading NIO officials.

The origins and basis of today's semi-yearly parole scheme date back to 1948 when Christmas Home leave was introduced by the then Minister of Home affairs, Sir Edmund Wardock.

The initial scheme was then expanded in 1955 to include summer home leave. At Christmas the Home leave scheme was confined to a stipulated six day period, while the summer scheme was extended over a three month period; June July and August. A prisoner was eligible for this semi-yearly parole if he/she had half of his serving sentence completed, i.e. 5 year sentence - effective sentence 3 years 6 months - eligible after 1 year 8 months. And was of 'Star' classification - a star class prisoner is one who is serving his first term of imprisonment, and as such is entitled to certain privileges and treatment. 'Old-hand' second-time or more in prison - prisoners were not eligible. It should be stated that such a system of classification can not be applied to Political Prisoners.

X-WORD SOLUTIONS

ACROSS	DOWN
8. Hopscotch.	1. Chopsticks.
10. Italy.	2. Appeased.
11. Pleaded.	3. Staid.
12. Outcast.	4. Chronicle.
14. Tasks.	5. M.I.
15. Prisoners.	6. Palace.
18. Sit.	7. Eyoat.
19. Laser.	9. Codes.
21. Straight.	13. Trots.
23. Repel.	15. Purchasers.
24. Sensual.	16. Settlement.
25. Bog.	18. Spira.
26. Bum.	20. Republic.
27. Cuter.	22. Rarity.
29. Rhododan.	23. Rogue.
	24. Sack.
	25. Boom.
	28. R.C.

The above system continued operating along these lines until the emergence of Political Status. The NIO state, that with the granting of status in 1972 and after much consideration, it was decided to include political prisoners in this scheme.

However they also state that due to the situation in Northern Ireland; the increase in the prison population and the nature of offences, that certain alterations and modifications in the area of eligibility had to be made. What form these alterations would take the NIO would not say.

From all this, it can be stated, without fear of contradiction, that since the granting of political status, the issue of summer and Christmas parole has always proved, at least for those prisoners holding political status, contentious.

Such contention has been manifested, in various ways, by other groups. But for our part, while maintaining that the present home leave scheme as implemented, is divisive, discriminatory and inconsistent to the point of being counter-productive, we hold that only through our constant participation in the scheme can we expose and highlight these abuses.

Even though we have, on numerous occasions brought these abuses and contradictions to the attention of the appropriate bodies, we have to date had no response.

Such an attitude can only be a reflection of those directly responsible for the home leave scheme.

Due to the furore that was raised over the Christmas home leave in 1975 and due to subsequent discussions we were informed by leading NIO officials that while the criteria for semi-yearly parole was half a prisoner's serving sentence a further criteria had been added in the case of political prisoners.

This 'new' criteria as stated by the NIO officials simply meant that a prisoner within their last year in the summer and last six months at Christmas would receive due consideration... At last the alterations had been divulged.

With the introduction of the new half remission scheme on March 1st, a new criteria for semi-yearly parole was drawn up, by the NIO. The criteria stated that those prisoners serving two years or more, being of star classification and with two thirds of their effective sentence completed by 30th September 1976, would be eligible for summer home leave.

According to the criteria laid down a total of twenty-two Republican prisoners were eligible for summer home leave.

However if one acknowledges the further criteria laid down by the NIO it meant that sixteen of those twenty-two were in their last 6 months, four in their last year and two in their last fifteen months.

According to the NIO's own 'new' criteria twenty Republican prisoner would be given due consideration... Only fourteen prisoners received summer home leave! So much for the new criteria, and the platitudes of the NIO. Officials.

It is from figures collated over the years that we state that the present home leave scheme as implemented, is divisive, discriminatory and incongruous with contemporary prison reform.

The question of such a home leave scheme being divisive is based on facts, and we shall let these facts speak for themselves.

Of the Republican prisoners eligible for summer home leave, there were three separate sets of men, jointly charged, convicted

and serving the same sentences - each of the set being equally eligible for parole.

But in only one case did both receive home leave. In the other two cases the two men who did receive home leave were both single... those who did not were married. Such instances are commonplace, and similar cases could be quoted from almost every period since the scheme became operative for political prisoners.

We further contend that the scheme is discriminatory, in so far as under the present system, prisoners who hold political status, are still classified in terms of 'star' and 'old hand'.

While we are opposed to classification for any prisoners, the facts remain that prisoners holding political status at the moment are all on equal footing. Thus the scheme differentiates between men who we contend are equally eligible.

Political Prisoners have been arrested under special laws; are subjected to special methods and treatment in the course of interrogation; stand trial before special courts; receive special treatment while in prison; therefore due to these special circumstances the continued classification of special category (political) prisoners is a contradiction in terms of reality.

Again, the attitude and stance adopted by the NIO to demands for re-classification of political prisoners only bolsters the already blatant facts - prior to political status a P/O (principle officer) could recommend a prisoner for re-classification or an Assistant Governor could recommend and grant it. Since Political status the NIO has taken responsibility for such requests... to date not one has been granted.

Again, with the introduction of the new half-remission scheme the term penal reform

was floated. However if we look objectively at this year's summer parole in the context of penal reform; we will find that the former has no relation to the latter. And if anything they are a contradiction of each other.

Accepting the premise, in this instance, that if the penal process is supposed to be rehabilitative, surely then any parole scheme must be an integral part of that process.

In our case we find that neither prison nor parole are rehabilitative.

Therefore, the question follows, why have a parole system at all? We would like the NIO to answer that one!

We must state however, that the present parole scheme, as implemented, is being abused by the NIO - the political connotations of which cannot be ignored.

We would suggest that if the people concerned are really genuine about penal reform then the introduction of a proper and constructive parole scheme is a golden opportunity to implement such reforms.

We accept that certain factors must be considered in relation to such a scheme in the light of the Northern Ireland political climate but we should add, for too long has this climate been used as an excuse by the more reactionary elements within the penal administration, to obstruct progressive penal reforms in Northern Ireland.

This indeed is reflected in the current parole system. Finally it is worth mentioning that in 1948 Sir Edmund Wardock displayed a certain initiative and even conviction when he introduced what became the basis for today's home leave scheme.

Today if the NIO displayed the same initiative and conviction it would prove more constructive than issuing ambiguous misleading statements.

GREETINGS

Happy Birthday Mark from dad (Lower Falls);
Happy Birthday on your 6th, Susan, love dad (B/Murphy).
Congrat's SOD on your forthcoming engagement, THE LADS Cage 2
Happy Anniversary Sheila, your darling Joe, Cage 2 XXXXXXXX
Congratulations Trevor and Margaret from Matt and Joe, about time (N.Lodge)
Happy Anniversary mum & dad from Matt (N/Lodge);
Congrats' Mary and Paul from Matt and Joe (N/Lodge);
Congrats' Johnny & Madge from Sim, (Newry);
Best of luck on the big day Jimmy and Mary, from Joe, Matt, Soda, Rat, Frank Lame, and Big Walter, also the rest of the lads in Cage 2.
Happy Birthday Alex from John (Bawnmore) & Junior Armagh);
Happy Birthday Geordie from Marty (B/Murphy).
Congrats' Micky & Jennifer from Paddy 9 (Lurgan);
Happy anniversary Mum & Dad from your son Con. (L/Falls);
Congrats' Paul & Maureen from your big brother Con. (L/Falls);
Congrats' Sean & Teassy on your second from Frankie (B/Murphy);
Congratulations Seamus and Helen from Donal, Neil & Hicky (A/Town).
Happy anniversary Anne from Liam (N/Lodge);
Wedding greetings to Sadie & Dessie from Brian & Bobby 9. (T./Lodge);
Happy birthday ma, hope on your next one I will be free. Martin;
Happy Birthday Grace from Sammy, 9. (L/Falls);
Wedding greetings to Joe & Isobel from Brian, Beechmount.
Get well dad from Martin, B/Murphy;
Congratulations Frankie and Margaret on your wedding day from Paul (New Lodge);
Happy birthday Ann from your brother Frank, (L/Falls);
Happy Birthday Mary from Liam & Bridget, (L/Falls);
What about the medals Pat? A.P.
Congratulations Frankie and Lorraine also Damian and Michlene. from Con, Paddy, Donal, Hick, Zac, Zareo, all the lads.
Congratulations Mary and Michael on new arrival from Micky (Rostrevor).

Humour TUNNEL PATROL HOLE-I-GANS

The hut settled down for the night; silence, like the darkness, descended on the exhausted prisoners, permeating every fibre of their being and consciousness, leaving limp forms lying, sprawled on war department mattresses.

From the surrounding cage wire, pale green security lamps beamed thro' barred windows, casting the bars on the windows, into wierd geometrical shadows on the tiled floor of the hut.

Despite the occasional, muffled, incomprehensible mutter from some weary sleeper-nothing stirred.

What's that? asked the O/C in a low whisper.

"That noise, that, shall we say, chipping noise..."

The prisoner listened attentively... "Do you hear it? asked the O/C.

"No, wait! ...just now...yes I can hear it!..."

"It sounds as if someone is digging" said the O/C sitting up on his bed.

And indeed the sound of digging could be heard, quite distinctly now and becoming progressively louder each moment.

"You'd think someone was tunnelling into Long Kesh", joked the prisoner.

The thought, in a more serious context had crossed the O/C's mind.

But the earth was laced with ultra-sensitive sound detectors, the task was utterly impossible! Of course there was always the possibility of the Prison establishment working on the drainage system, but the O/C dismissed this out of hand. Everyone knew Prison employees - perhaps screws is a better term - represented the laziest section of the population.

Then what was it?

The two prisoners lay back on their bunks and listened. An hour passed; the noise had ceased, the two did not sleep and the click of lights from other parts of the hut indicated that they were not alone.

After half an hour, the noise had restarted. This time very close and very loud. The noise rose from his bed and crossed over to the window and peered out. The night was fresh and clear, calm and quiet, there was nothing to indicate any disturbance of any kind the hut was experiencing.

The digging and chipping noise had given way to scraping and tearing - the hut was fully aroused; the men exchanged views and opinions; some started to dress, pulling on roughly their boots and jeans. The noise had reached such a pitch and violence that the hut shook and reverberated; windows rattled and cutlery crashed to the floor.

"Christ! what's happening?" yelled a nervous prisoner. The rest held onto their beds. The hut was in the grip of some unseen force. One prisoner in the confusion managed to switch on the lights and there in the centre of the floor we could see a small hole gradually becoming larger and larger until it measured almost 12 feet in circumference.

A muddy hand appeared out of the depths then a head then a whole body, covered in fossil black mud. Then another and another each armed with a shovel or spade or drill; until about twenty or thirty of the intruders stood, menacingly around the hole... no one spoke.

From the darkness of the hole emerged

another figure - no one moved. Thro' a face smeared with boot polish and dirt, glared triumphantly two hideous eyes... From the bright red-neck and the protruding posterior it soon became clear to the dumbfounded prisoners who it was. What was going on. It was the terror of the Kesh; security P/O Short!

The man stepped forward and addressed the O/C - "This is a raid for tunnels, assemble your men and go to the canteen."

"We can't get out to the canteen, the doors of our hut are locked" replied the O/C.

"So you're refusing a search" retorted Short.

Just then A.G. Burdock's outside head appeared at the mouth of the hole. "Short! for Christ's sake give me a hand" he yelled in typical bullying fashion.

"They're refusing a search sir" Short said with a wide, stupid leer, stretching out a hand to the Governor who reluctantly accepted it.

Burdock stood upright in what seemed to have been a grey suit, white shirt and green - yes green duffle coat, under his arm he had a brief case, with rumour has it absolutely nothing in it. He strutted over the O/C "what is this about refusing a search".

Burdock, a reputed speaker of the Irish language, like many others of his sort had joined the prison service recently, and in an effort to hide his original accent, had developed an obscure dialect known only in Long Kesh.

His fanatical obsession with rules and regulations was a product of his personal ambition. However unlike Caesars', his ambition was in no way adventurous.

He was prepared to ape his betters. To them, the warlords in the NIO, and therefore to him, the prisoners had to be punished for crimes against their society.

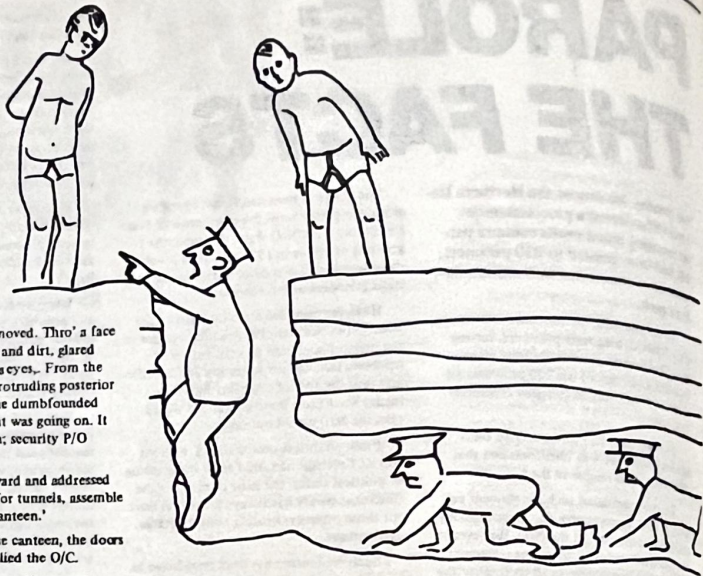
It was his job to see that the screws carried out their job to the fullest. Such "not an inch" attitudes had not gone unnoticed in high places.

The O/C carefully explained exactly what he had said to Short, who by this time was standing behind the Governor, picking his nose with a dirty finger. "Typical!" exclaimed Burdock, who then ordered Short back down the tunnel, with instructions to contact outside and have the doors unlocked.

Short disappeared into the hole with much mumbling and grumbling. The prisoners pressed Burdock for some form of explanation - "Why couldn't you have used the front door?" they asked.

"Because" Burdock began, brushing some dirt behind his ear, which reminded prisoners of the impossibility of making silk purses from pigs ears. "Short came up with a brilliant idea, we are part of a tunnel patrol. We tunnel under the camps searching for tunnels. Of course we play havoc with the ultra-sensitive sound detectors; we believe our presence underground, is a deterrent to would-be tunnellers and also it enables us to surprise prisoners from underground.

The exchange was interrupted by the rattle of keys at the front door. Locks were turned, bolts slid back and doors opened. The sky by now had lost its inky blackness. To the east there was a hint of sun and of dawn. In the early morning gloom, framed in the open doorway was the silhouette of the



dreaded Short and of one fat Henry. The latter entered the hut and stood in his usual para-military stance. Short came forward and ordered the prisoners into the canteen.

The last prisoner to leave, glanced behind him to see the screws begin work with the picks and shovels.

From the canteen the weary prisoners could hear considerable banging, thudding and screaming as the zealous screws went about their work. After an hour or two or three the grotesque Henry once more appeared, once again standing in a way inexplicably reminiscent of para-military parade through Portadown. Then came Short. "Right you can return to your huts, and remember no hanky-panky, Tunnel Patrol is always vigilant.

The prisoners led by their O/C returned

to the huts, just in time to catch a glimpse of the last of T.P. disappear down the hole. The hut itself was a mass of huge holes: holes in doors, holes in the roof, holes in the radio and T.V., holes everywhere.

Burdock entered the hut, electing obviously to stay on the surface.

"Sorry about this old chap" he said in his queer accent, and with his usual air of indifference.

"The T.P. do get a bit enthusiastic at times" but why all the holes" asked the O/C. "For tunnels of course, I admit some of them are in unusual places, but where there is the slightest possibility we must check it out." "They came in search of tunnels" said a disgruntled prisoner and left a lot of holes. A bunch of bloody hole-i-gans that's what they are!

THE AIR ATTACK

The day was unusually quiet. The few volunteers that were milling around the yard, haunched their shoulders indifferently to the movement in Cage 3.

The compound was uncharacteristically calm, due to the mid-day heat.

The cage O.C. stood at the doorway of the hut and surveyed the quiet scene. Small knots of men engaged in idle banter and out of the side of his eye he observed some provos just like mad dogs and Englishmen - out in the mid-day sun.

The Provos he noted were perched, like vultures, on the roof of the hut nearest our Cage. Whatever could they be up to?

He had not long to wait for an answer. A tiny speck descended, from the heavens, hurried it seemed from across the wire.

"What in the name of God" he exclaimed, as the projectile shattered into a thousand goosy fragments upon the tarmac.

"EGGS!" someone shouted.

They're attacking us with EGGS!

Egg after egg poured down with a breath taking intensity.

Dive for cover, cried the O.C. well aware that eggs could soil boots and jeans at anything up to ten inches range.

"Get out of range! get out of range!

ordered another officer as the provos kept firing from concealed positions: known only to ourselves, the Y.P.s and the screws.

"God! said one Provo "How do those sticks soak up so much punishment".

"Ye" said another "I expect, they'll merrily der by 6 o'clock."

Meanwhile back in 2 we stood in bewilderment "Does this mean war?" "Perhaps it is something we said?"

The Provos were jubilant, said one to his leader "You know your'e a great strategist... statap..." "Strategist is the word!"

"Ay you'd make a good one of them too!"

What were we to do? wondered the O.C. here we were being bombarded by a bunch of egits - stocked up, apparently, for an all night siege.

"Ignore them! That's it, ignore them!" right lads, just pretend they're not there. Just go about your business as usual.

The Provos looked on in disbelief. "They can't do that" they cried "It's against the rules".

"There's nothing about this in Eire Ness" said another. "But I might have expected the Sticks to back down. Ah well fried eggs for tea".

"Oh no there isn't, came the reply."

BACK BILL OF RIGHTS CALL

No one is better placed perhaps, than the prisoner, to appreciate and feel the full weight of the injustices and contradictions of a Society. In the Six Counties especially amid the rising tide of sectarianism, mass unemployment, the housing shortage and a welter of repressive legislation; the prisoner, the prisoner who has experienced at first hand the bullyboy tactics of the RUC in an RUC torture centre; the prisoner who has been charged under some 'new' repressive law, sentenced by a no-jury court, by a judge with a record of service in the British army and the Unionist party; the prisoner who languishes in a concentration camp, knows full well the extent of corruption, the excesses and abuses of the State.

Today in the Six Counties, human and civil rights have been sacrificed on the altar of political expediency.

A leading RUC thug was recently quoted as saying "We can't box under Queensberry rules - the provos don't".

What he meant was "In our private war, with the Provos, the rights of the mass of the people have to get the boot".

This 'Military solution' mentality will solve nothing. Yet it is absolutely typical of the negative thinking of the Northern Ireland Office.

Republicans demand 'Peace, Work and Class Politics', and we believe that this cannot be attained by sticking the boot in.

It can only be achieved by a complete reversal of the present repressive trend, by the introduction of positive, constructive legislation guaranteeing full civil rights to the mass of the people.

We are not so naive as to think that such legislation will be a ready-made solution in itself, but we do say that it would be a step in the right direction.

This Bill of Rights is one of the most progressive demands which can be made at this time and indeed it is a demand which enjoys the support of the most progressive elements within the community.

The Bill must consolidate any previous victories won in housing; extend anti-discrimination laws to private as well as public employment, negate all repressive laws, free

the police from party political control, disarm them, abolish the Special Branch and clean up the Judiciary.

It should ensure the right to hold and propagate any political view-point; that is it should ensure the freedom of speech of which the British government so often boasts. This legislation must of course be accompanied by suitable machinery to enforce it.

SECTARIANISM

To guarantee equal rights to all citizens regardless of colour, creed, or sex, a Bill has recently been passed in Britain, yet what of problems peculiar to the Six Counties? A similar, more comprehensive Bill is surely needed, if we are to have some basis from which to build strong links across the sectarian divide. Sectarianism is the greatest social and political evil of our time, until worker stops killing worker, the working class is doomed to remain impotent in this or any other economic crisis.

HOUSING:

Everyone is entitled to adequate shelter, at the moment the Government's only answer seems to be the construction of multi-million pound cell-blocks at Long Kesh, this in itself proves just what can be achieved with public funds. We propose that under the new legislation building be taken out of the hands of private concerns and public finances be used to alleviate the crisis.

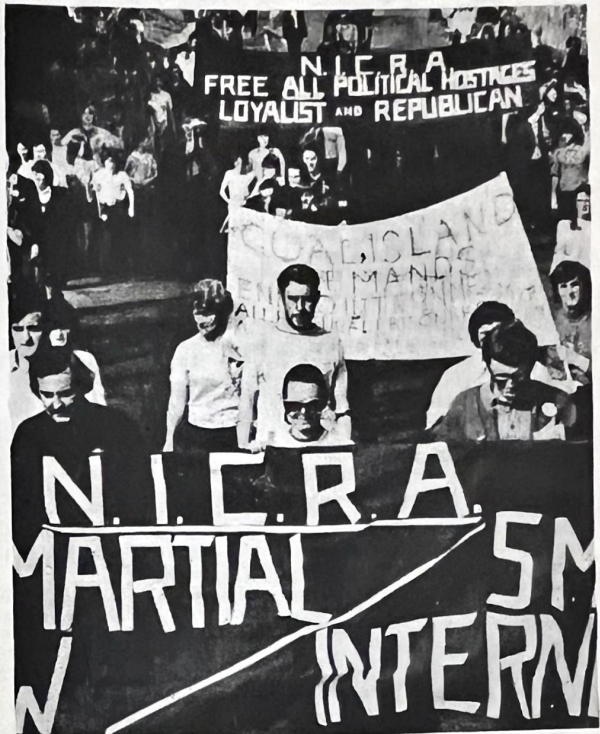
EDUCATION:

While millions of pounds are being spent on defence, security and prisons, the Government, intend, they say, to slash Education costs; here too we say education should be given priority with public funds. We demand comprehensive education at all levels and integration, these measures in themselves would go a long way to ending the cancer of sectarianism.

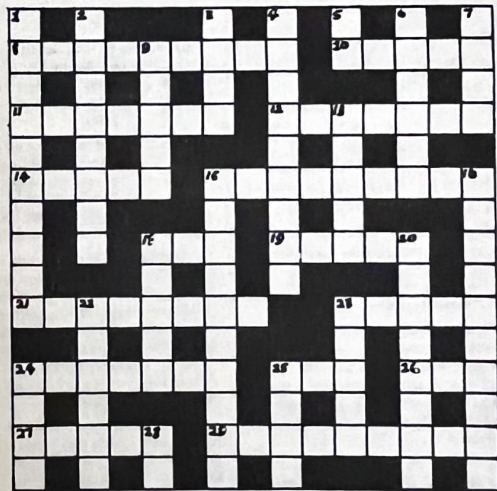
THE POLICE:

The problem of the RUC is central to the strife, and unless it is disbanded and replaced by a community controlled, unarmed, non-political police service acceptable to all sections of the community, peace and stability is impossible.

The introduction of such measures will not solve overnight the complex problems of the Six Counties, but it will represent an effort to deal with the causes of the strife, not just the symptoms.



CROSSWORD



CLUES ACROSS

8. Children's street game.
10. West European country.
11. Begged.
12. Black Sheep?
14. Chores.
15. Hostages.
18. Harold Wilson is one now.
19. Device producing intense beam of light.
21. Not curved.
23. Drive back.
24. Earnest.
25. Soft marshy ground.
26. Cadger.
27. Prettier.
29. Resident of Zimbabwe

CLUES DOWN

1. Chinese eating utensils.
2. Pacified.
3. Irish Halt.
4. Newspaper.
5. Military Intelligence (Initials).
6. Crystal or Buckingham.
7. Small Island.
9. Ciphers.
13. Instant revolutionaries.
15. Shoppers.
16. Agreement.
18. ----- Agnew, yankee politician.
20. A 32 county socialist-----
22. Truth in politics is a ----- ?
23. Villain.
24. Workers are often threatened with this?
25. Bonanza.?
28. Initials of world wide religion.

SOLUTION p3

Fiction

The Visit

It was a dull enough morning. Beyond the football pitch, grey-black clouds were massing above the magical green hills, which marked the motorway and freedom.

He did not think that it would rain, not until afternoon anyway, so there would be no speedy relief, from the damp, oppressive heat, that added to his listlessness.

He took his place among the football shirted ranks, and although he had thought of using the uncertain timing of his visit to excuse himself, began the morning's P.T.

Afterwards while busy about the routine tasks of the day, the clearing away, the lining and the mopping, he thought about his past and future.

The end was in sight now. There were no more years, to be crawled through, just months, and then he would be with his wife and kids again.

He had watched the eldest of his two boys, gradually shove his hands deeper into his pockets, and round his shoulders growing more serious and solemn, as if life and youth were not things to laugh at and experiment with, but heavy responsibilities.

The younger, to his mind, was a bit too lively and undisciplined, and lacked a father's guidance. The thought of his little girl, as always made him feel vulnerable and angry at his captors, and with himself.

His wife most of all, had felt the strains of the past years. He, after all was a soldier, even if a prisoner, and so could almost content himself to only struggle with the enemy.

But she was a mother and a wife, without a husband, and he suspected, a Republican more through him than personal conviction.

She must often have felt abandoned and bitter.

In the songs that are most popular in the bars, very little praise is heard of wives and girlfriends who wait. But maybe that is more reason to respect them, not less.

He stopped, and thought it curious, that now, at this moment, he should be considering the quiet heroism of his wife. He knew, that like most things, he, as a man, constantly demonstrated becomes usual, and slowly merges into the flatter virtues, of endurance and stamina.

Qualities that we respect, but do not actually marvel at. Ignoring the predictably surprised look from his cubicle companion, he said aloud: "YES! she has been a hero"; for perhaps mistakenly, he considered words to be more powerful than thoughts.

They gave form and substance to his dread and wishes, speeding their arrival, not fending them away. Startled, he realised that he feared for the continued devotion of his wife.

There was nothing really that he could put his finger upon, but the general tone of her letters lately, and their slightly disoriented state, had disturbed him, without him being fully aware of it, at the time. God knows, it was hard enough, writing a letter for almost four years, with little to convey but the shady and dimly perceived changes of personality.

Yet, she had always taken such care to keep her image alive for him. Or so he had thought.

At the beginning, it had been painful, both for him and for her, to accept his imprisonment, but after a troubled six months, they had learned which bits of conversation to con-

centrate on and which to avoid.

So much so, that he had almost ceased to be conscious of the obstacles built by years of absence, and had walked from her easily after each visit.

For she had confided in and reassured him by the week. All in thirty minutes, and with a warner standing in the doorway pretending not to listen.

Maybe it had all been too easy for him. Perhaps, since tacitly it had not been encouraged, she had not spoken about what really concerned her, and so had allowed herself to be removed, until he had become distant from her.

He had been a monk coming down from his cloister, to speak to a rarely seen relative, about the weather.

The morning had been passing rapidly. The large silver containers, full of cooling dinner, were already being unloaded from the truck into the compound trolley; when he came from the shower-block after washing. The drizzling rain and the greyness of the wire, blurred his vision of the anoracked figures, pulling the trolley, towards the hut, which served for a canteen.

He lay on top of his bed until two, listening to the talk in the hut and smoking. When the radio was turned off he began slowly to prepare for his visit.

Despite his meticulousness however, he was ready to be called by half past two. The rest of it was waiting and thinking of how to put into words what he meant to say, as if a stranger was coming.

His wife would be coming up alone, her mother looking after the children; he felt nervous and ill at ease. His friends seeing him dressed up, ask needlessly was he waiting for a visit? He replied traditionally "No! I'm expecting a letter" but with little humour.

To avoid appearing obviously concerned, he went into the study-hut and opening a book in front of him, gazed out upon the puddle strewn yard. Three years and seven months were being focussed and fused together into the coming thirty minutes.

All the cares and formlessness of the past, crushed together into an impossible space, to dispel his hope for the future.

He realised of course, that now he must begin to deliberately plan for outside life; to adopt and prepare himself and his wife for his release. That would mean time would pass slowly for him, for thinking of the future would make him impatient with the present.

Most of all he was wary of becoming a burden upon his comrades. A walking reminder that he was going and they were staying to face a doubtful future.

Neither reason nor personal antagonisms, could dispel the smell of treachery of turning a back on men, he had lived with so long. The inside world touched little upon that of the outside.

That is its justification in the eyes of its creators. The passage between parallel realities must rent and tear, and maybe leave his mark upon him forever.

Yet it was better, he thought, to embark willingly upon that journey and so retain some measure of direction, than drift aimlessly.

His mouth was dry and stale from cigarette smoke, by the time the compound runner tapped on the window, telling him his visit was up. The steady drizzle had almost soaked his anorak through, before he reached the van, and rain drops hung from the dull con-



certina wire. He had been the first called, and so was alone except for the screw who sat at the bottom of the van, looking intently at the misted windows and holding the door open with one leg.

He always disliked the actual wait inside the visiting box. The interval before the sound of footsteps, which stopped at his door always seemed so long, and enabled an inexplicable anxiety to grow, which could mean the highest mood.

He occupied himself rolling a surplus of cigarettes. Yet it could not have been five minutes before she was there, shutting the door, without an inside handle with a bang and a laugh of explanation for her delay.

He tried to tell her of what he had been thinking, but although she seemed to understand, the difficulty he had with the wording

and its obvious inadequacy irritated and worried him almost to desperation.

By the end of the visit he was far from sure, whether he had understood, or pretended understanding out of kindness. He began to doubt whether he could make her understand and wondered how many other marriages had begun the slide of collapse from just such a visit, in the brief, but eventful history of Long Kesh.

He consoled himself with the fact that thirty minutes, were not enough but only amounted to the regulated prison period for the renewal of partings.

He had made a start. It also takes time to repair the damages of time.

The rain had stopped as he stepped from the van back into the compound, and he thought, with a bit of luck, it might clear up.



The Prisoners' Co-op & Alienation

The object of a Co-op must be to provide an alternative to the individual who embraces the Capitalist system by carrying out production, distribution or exchange simply and solely for profit.

That is he either produces goods or engages in some other aspect of business which stems from production so that he will realise more money than he started out with.

Production of goods for the purpose of consumption or production (machines) under the Capitalist system acquires a perverted form: in that they will only be produced for profit - the articles themselves are not important, just the money. No money = no production. Money thus takes on a power of its own. Men toil to acquire it, indeed many men spend their life accumulating it. Society is split into two great groups, those with money and those without - the haves and the have nots, the Capitalist and the worker.

In his search for more profits the Capitalist calls forth science and technology. To increase profit he speeds up production - he introduces the machine. But the machine does not free man from mental tasks, rather it condemns him to attend the machine, to be its slave.

His every action is dictated by it, when it speeds up, he speeds up, when it slows down he slows down. He does not start until it starts, he does not stop until it stops... Thus man becomes alienated from his labour, that is, it becomes something foreign to him. He sees nothing but the nuts and bolts of what he produces. His labour is a force outside of him, he is only 'himself' during his leisure period.

This endless search for profit and domination of the machine also alienates man from man.

By building a Co-Op in our cage, we tried in some small measure to tackle these problems, we have endeavoured to involve all the producers (workers) in management, administration and the day to day running of the Co-Op. This greater participation by all draws us closer together. The labour does not appear as something forced upon us, but as a creative activity which unites you with your comrades.



There is a great satisfaction in transforming raw materials into say a harp or a wallet, to see the finished product of your own labour and not just simply the nuts and bolts. What you cannot achieve with your own labour is achieved by the collective labour of others, just as the fruits of that labour is distributed according to your contribution.

Private property and exploitation is replaced - not spontaneously - by the conscious and persistent struggle to make the individual realise that his contribution is for the benefit and welfare of the whole community, this is an important factor in our fight against alienation.

Alienation stems from the way in which society is organised. If property is privately and not publicly owned, then the worker does not feel a part of that property or of production. The workers must seize the means of production and use them - not for profit - but for the greater good of all. Only then will alienation give way to human development.