

Irish Republican Information Service.

14th. December, 1975.

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A Chara,

You may or may not be aware of the facts regarding the inhuman conditions presently prevailing in Port Laoise Prison.

On reading the following we appeal for your help in demanding a sworn public inquiry into the conduct of the prison management and its policies. The facts, as given by Daithi O'Conaill and smuggled out of Port Laoise, are as follows:

On Wednesday, November 25th. 1975, the Governor, a Mr. O'Reilly, informed the prisoners that delph cups, kept in the cells by the men, were being replaced by plastic cups and if there were any objections riot police would be sent into carry out his orders. A request to refrain from such action was dismissed. In order to avoid a confrontation and as a protest against the lowering of the already inhuman standards and conditions, the prisoners disposed of the delph by dropping it from the cell windows. Within an hour the following punishment was inflicted on all political prisoners:-

a) Removal of all furniture and beds from cells; b) Deprivation of exercise, ablutions, laundry, recreational, craft, library and TV facilities; c) Banning of all visits, mail and newspapers; d) Withdrawal of shop facilities; e) Harassment of prisoners by frequent searches and threats to strip men naked; f) Denial of access to Chaplains and legal advisers; g) Collective fining of all political prisoners of £3.50 each without their consent.

Not content with this punishment, the Governor alleged that a small quantity of gelignite had been found in one of the cells and he instructed his warders to carry out an orgy of destruction, removing beds from the cells and smashing hundreds of tables and lockers. The punishment resulted in prisoners eating and sleeping on the floors. The prisoners now "butter" their bread with their fingers as all knives, plastic or otherwise, were seized.

Attempts to procure a bed for a 67-year-old man, Mr. John Keogh, serving a sentence for possession of a copy of "Freedom Struggle" were rejected but he was permitted one chair in his cell.

The following week the Governor ruled that all educational facilities, lectures and debates were banned, together with correspondence courses and Dept. of Education examinations. The Dept. of Justice ruled that no prisoner had the right to advance the education of another.

Please speak out and help to remedy these brutal conditions.

Is mise,

P.O'Murchu, Runai.