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**IRELAND**

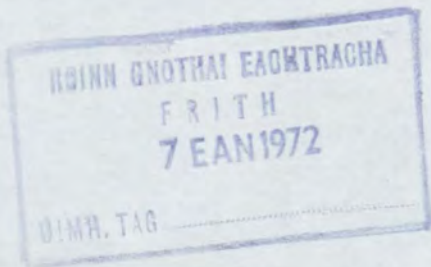


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*With the Compliments of the  
Permanent Representative of Ireland  
to the United Nations*



*Mary*

*Please P.A. ~~25/4~~ 25/4 on*

*L.H.S. . .*

*J.X.O'D  
13/3/78*

Sanitation:

Each dormitory hut had only two chemical closets for use at night when the huts were locked. The internees complained bitterly of the unpleasant smell. The Governor assured the delegates that water closets would shortly be provided.

Both internment compounds had an ablutions hut (9 showers, 12 washhand basins, 9 WCs) with adequate hot and cold water. They were available without restriction to all internees from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. They were modern, well designed and, in the delegates' opinion, adequate.

Nevertheless, internees wished to have duckboards on the concrete floors leading to the showers and curtains to the showers themselves. These two requests, justified on grounds of hygiene and decency, were submitted by the delegates to the Governor who undertook to satisfy them.

Diet:

The kitchens were modern, well-equipped and extremely well-maintained. The meals were taken from the kitchen to the two internment compounds in insulated containers. The meal served during the visit was sufficient and well prepared.

Tuckshop:

This was clean, well stocked, and available to the internees twice a week. It sold all the usual consumer goods.

Medical and dental care:

Medical treatment was provided by a local civilian doctor, Dr. S.D. Spence, who was one of a four-member medical partnership. At night and weekends, there was always a doctor on standby. In emergency the medical officer of the military camp surrounding the internment camp was available.

The camp hospital was a separate unit. It included a consulting room, an office, a waiting room and a ten-bed infirmary. There were three medical orderlies running the infirmary.

Ailments were recorded in the hospital register; the doctor's notes were copied onto the National Health Service individual cards used in all medical services throughout Great Britain.

At the doctor's request, specialists in the various branches of medicine (particularly in ophthalmology) were allowed into the camp. In addition, internees could be visited by their own doctors.

Pending the construction of a dental cabinet, a mobile dental unit visited the camp on request.

A full-time social worker, Miss Kennedy, was available to the internees.

In the opinion of the doctor-delegate, the internees' state of health seemed good. The internees themselves confirmed that the medical service operated well.

#### Clothing:

The internees wore their own clothes, which would be replaced by the administration when worn out. Coats were to be issued when the weather turned cold. The internees' personal effects were washed outside the camp at the administration's expense. However, although the internment compounds did not have laundry facilities, some internees preferred to do their own laundry. The administration planned to provide drying rooms for each compound.

The internees had four woolen blankets and the bedsheets were changed weekly. Extra blankets were available.

#### Relations with the outside world:

- a) mail : Internees were permitted to send and receive four letters each week. They complained that incoming mail was delayed. In the Governor's opinion, the censorship slowed up mail distribution. However, he felt that the delay was attributable mainly to the disturbances in Northern Ireland which adversely affected the postal service.
- b) parcels : There was no limit to the number of parcels admitted. Some commodities, such as tinned food, detergents, etc., were not permitted, for reasons of security.
- c) family visits : Each internee could receive a thirty-minute visit each week. The visit was limited to three adults and two children under twelve. The delegates felt that more frequent visits might have a favourable influence on the morale of the internees (see Conclusions).

Work:

None. However, the internees themselves had organized a rota for any urgent work (cleanliness, etc.).

Leisure and physical exercise:

In view of the absence of work, all the internees' time was leisure time. Dormitories were unlocked from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., during which time the internees were free to do as they wished within the compound. However, there was no playing ground or recreation hut (reading, study, games, hobbies, etc.). In both compounds, the internees spent their days in the over-crowded dormitories (see Conclusions), in the mess, or in the open air in the concrete yard which was small in relation to the number of internees. The rough surface of the yard had many deep puddles (see Location) which reduced the already restricted surface and made it unsuitable for exercise.

The Governor stated that the planning arrangements for the camp made provision for :

1. the repair of the water-logged surface (which would increase the yard area by about one third);
2. a large playing ground, which the delegates observed was already being laid;
3. recreation huts for each existing or future compound.

In each dormitory hut there was a television and a radio. The mess rooms also had a radio and a ping-pong table.

100 daily papers of every political tendency were distributed each day. Internees could also subscribe to newspapers of their own choice.

Treatment and discipline:

Relations between prison officers and internees were said by both parties to be "fair". The ICRC delegates did indeed observe a certain tension within the camp.

Many internees complained of brutal treatment by the army when they were arrested and for several days thereafter. They recognized, however, that they had been well-treated since their arrival at Long Kesh.

The constant presence of the British army around the internment camp seemed to be a factor making for tension which could not but increase with time. The inactivity of the one side, and the tension in which the others lived could in the long run constitute an explosive mixture.

Interviews without witnesses:

The delegates freely talked with the detainees of their choice. It appeared that the main subjects of discontent were :

1. overcrowding
2. the impossibility of holding religious service for all internees each Sunday
3. the poor state of the yard of both complexes due to the rain water which lodged there
4. the absence of recreational facilities.

Religion:

All internees were Roman Catholics. They complained that they could not attend religious service on Sunday due to the shortage of priests. It should be mentioned, however, that a priest held mass in the camp each Sunday but that only part of the internees were authorized to attend, for security reasons. The ICRC delegates considered that two or more priests should hold services each Sunday for all the internees.

Conclusions:

All complaints which the ICRC delegates considered justified were passed on to the Governor of Long Kesh and to the Government of Northern Ireland. Two complaints must be singled out in this report in view of their gravity, namely: overcrowding and the lack of recreational facilities.

A thorough visit of the premises, accompanied by the Governor and internees, the numerous talks in private with the internees, and the experience acquired in visiting detention centres throughout the world, led the ICRC delegates to conclude that even though there was living space for each internee, and a mathematically sufficient volume of air, there was overcrowding.

The delegates are of the opinion that the following subjective factors should be taken into consideration :

1. The internee, unlike the convicted man, suffers mental anguish. He believes himself to be unjustly arrested and he cannot calculate the number of days he has to wait for release: his morale is rapidly affected.
2. Total inactivity, in the absence of recreational facilities or work, has the same effect.

3. The herding together and the cheek-by-jowl existence with internees of all ages; the impossibility of obtaining any privacy; the lack of space and the total absence of physical or intellectual exercise breaks the strongest will.
4. The internee is a man without a future: this anxious man should be given as much opportunity as possible for intellectual and physical pursuits and for privacy; in other words, playing fields and recreation rooms.

The ICRC delegates believe that the reduction of the conditions of overcrowding and the provision of recreational facilities would greatly contribute to a reduction of the extreme tension which they observed. The authorities of Northern Ireland affirmed their readiness to reduce overcrowding and to provide physical and intellectual recreational facilities.

The ICRC delegates hope that if such measures are carried out they will notice a considerable improvement in internment conditions during their next visit in December 1971.