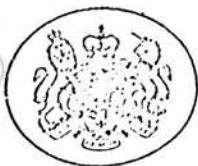


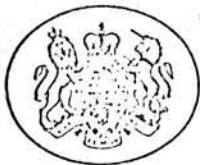
12 FEB 1934

CONFIDENTIAL

Mr. Justice
Mr. DalzellPS/MR ALISON

ARMAGH PRISON - PROTEST ACTION BY NON CONFORMING PRISONERS

1. We now have on our hands a dirty protest at Armagh Prison.
2. There are 32 non conforming prisoners involved. They are refusing to work and to wash and they are throwing containers of excreta, urine, rubbish and food into the ground floor of B wing and into the exercise yard. As yet they are not fouling their cells.
3. The prisoners are no longer washing in the ablutions. They have thrown their deodorants, soap, shampoo and face creams into the wings and they have handed back their towels to the wing staff and intimated that they do not want to have them replaced. No sheets were handed out for laundering.
4. The prisoners are coming out of their cells to take their statutory one hours exercise, to go to the ablutions and to collect their meals from the hot plate on the ground floor. They all attended mass on Sunday and whilst only staff and members of the Board of Visitors are being permitted into the Wing at present, the Prison Chaplains are free to see individual prisoners in the Chaplain's office.
5. The normal punishment handed out to female protesting prisoners is loss of remission (1 day for each day spent on protest), loss of privilege visits and parcels, loss of association with other prisoners at weekends and ban on attendance at weekly film shows.
6. The prisoners are being offered association but although they did join in association on Friday last they declined to do so last night and presumably will continue to do so.



7. Yesterday six of the protesters passed most of their clothing out of the prison to relatives during their statutory monthly visit. It is understood that other protesting prisoners have their clothing packed in black plastic bags ready to be handed out.
8. There are some 10 male prison orderlies at Armagh. They have refused to clean up the mess in the wings but we were able to recruit volunteers from the staff to do this after lock up last night and they did a good job in getting rid of the refuse and mopping up the ground floor of the wing.
9. Almost every time a cell is opened up for any reason the prisoner throws something into the wing. Notwithstanding this we are continuing to allow them out of their cells to go to the ablutions, collect meals, take exercise, go for visits etc and to take evening association if they are prepared to go so.
10. This intensified protest action would appear to be a reaction to the search operation carried out in the prison on Thursday last when a number of prohibited articles including paramilitary uniform dress, flags etc were recovered - there had been a full scale paramilitary style parade in the exercise yard on the previous Sunday when prisoners wore black berets, glasses, black skirts, etc and carried 3 flags.
11. We are taking steps to organise a cleaning team and we are examining the feasibility of moving the protesting prisoners from B wing where they occupy cells on two upper floors to A wing where they could be located on the ground floor.
12. A full account of the events at Armagh Prison over the past few days is contained in Mr Gibson's report of today's date (copy attached).

E N Barry

E N BARRY

12 February 1980

cc PS/Secretary of State
 PS/PUS
 Mr Hannigan
 Mr Marshall
 Mr Wyatt
 Mr Parker
 Mr Gilliland

Mr Irvine
 Mr Truesdale
 Mr Jackson
 Mr Smart