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HIA REF:373

Witness Name: HIA 373

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

WITNESS STATEMENT OF HIA 373

I, HIA 373, will say as follows:-

Personal details

1. I was born on [REDACTED] and I lived with my parents and siblings in [REDACTED]. I have a [REDACTED] and three younger siblings. I wanted to complete my 'A' Levels at the [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] but the School Principal felt that I was better suited to a technical school. My parents and the Principal had a meeting to discuss this. I overheard their conversation when I was waiting outside the office and I disagreed with what the Principal was saying. I found it difficult to manage my emotions back then and because I was frustrated, I broke a window and damaged a door. If I was a schoolchild today, I suspect I would be identified as being on the autistic spectrum. However, in those days there was little understanding of those conditions. I was prosecuted for criminal damage and the judge who dealt with the case sent me to a Young Offenders Centre for two months. I was only seventeen at the time.

Hydebank (1983 - 1984)

2. On 17 October 1983, I was taken to Crumlin Road Prison. This is where all the newly sentenced prisoners were taken. When I was in Reception, I was taken to an area with small cubicles and told to undress. I took off all my clothes and had to go out again to the public reception area wearing just a towel. The young offenders were treated the same as the adult prisoners. The prison

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officers carried out a physical examination taking a note of any scars or tattoos on my body. One of them took out a large flick knife and pulled my towel away from me and said, "This boy hasn't enough scars on him, I'll put a few more scars on him". He didn't touch me but I felt very threatened and afraid. In retrospect, I think this was intended as a joke but I found it frightening because I was so young. I spent the night at Crumlin Road in a cell with an adult prisoner and the next day I was taken to Hydebank Young Offenders Centre.

3. I experienced a lot of physical and psychological abuse at Hydebank. The prison officer in charge of Reception there was called [REDACTED] HB 4. His nickname was [REDACTED]. I was given a prison number and told to memorise it. I remember being slapped by [REDACTED] and another officer because I told him my number and did not follow it up with 'Sir'.
4. We were taken to the showers next and I remember having a cold shower and being given a delousing solution to wash with. After we had washed, we were given 'committal clothing'. This was normal civilian clothing from the prison laundry store. I was not allowed to wear my own clothing and I felt embarrassed wearing the clothes I had been given by the officers.
5. I was given one plate, a bowl, some cutlery, 3 pairs of socks and 3 pairs of shorts as well. These were all standard issue clothing. I was also given a green bed sheet and I carried all this to my cell. I was not allowed to keep any of my personal belongings. I should have gone to Elm House initially as this was where the first time prisoners were normally sent. Instead, I was taken to Willow House which had a stricter regime and this was where the prisoners who were second time offenders were sent. The Officer in charge at Willow House was a man called [REDACTED] HB 5. His nickname was [REDACTED]. He had short brown hair and a moustache. He was a strict disciplinarian and used to slap me about the face on an almost daily basis.
6. The regime in Willow House was aligned to the British Army's glasshouse system. This was a punishment regime which was designed to break your spirit. The prison rules were petty, for example, you were not allowed to talk to

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the other prisoners. We were locked in our cells for 16 hours a day and during this time, we were not allowed to lie on our beds. Instead, we had to sit on a plastic chair. I was told when I first arrived that I had no rights only privileges and I had to earn those. The prison officers shouted a lot and there was a constant threat of violence if you infringed any of the prison rules. The officers routinely slapped us on the face or head and used the threat of more serious beatings to maintain control. They referred to us as "prisoners" and by our numbers rather than our names.

7. A typical day in Hydebank consisted of being woken up at 6 am by my cell door being banged. My cell had to be maintained in a particular order and once I was washed, I would then spend about an hour tidying my cell. The beds had to be made in a particular way known as a 'bed block'. The prison officers would inspect the cells every morning after breakfast and if they found even the smallest piece of dust on their fingers, they would completely wreck it and I had to start all over again. Tidying my cell to an acceptable standard could take an hour or more every morning.
8. The doors to our cells were opened at 7 am. We had to stand to attention outside our cell door and then we were marched down to breakfast. We had to eat in silence. We were usually given inedible porridge or eggs which I didn't like and couldn't eat. We were marched back to our cells and in those first weeks there, I frequently returned to find my cell wrecked. One of the prison officers would slap me and shout at me if this happened. I remember one of the officers saying to me "We will break your spirit, this is how we break your spirits, you know".
9. The rest of the time was spent completing endless repetitive chores for example, cleaning and mopping the floors of the institution. Sometimes as a punishment, I would have to clean the floors of my cell with a toothbrush. I found this task humiliating and degrading. I was locked up again at lunchtime and allowed out from about 2pm until 5pm. Then I was locked up again until supper-time. We were allowed to watch TV until half seven and then locked up for the night.

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10. Prisoners barricaded themselves in their cells quite frequently, approximately every ten days. The prison was locked down and our normal routine was suspended if this occurred. One of the prison officers would bring up a hydraulic jack and use it to open the cell door. A group of officers would then go into the particular cell, beat the prisoner and drag him out to the punishment cells which were on the ground floor of the prison. These were bare cells which did not even have a mattress. A prisoner in these cells was put on a restricted diet of bread and water. I became accustomed to hearing the prisoners screaming when they were being beaten and taken out after barricading themselves in their cells. The cell mates on either side of my own cell barricaded themselves inside their cell at various times while I was in Hydebank. The prison officers assaulted them and dragged them out in this way. I remember one of the officers on duty that day was called **HB 11** and I was certain he was involved. On another occasion, I remember seeing a prisoner dragged out of his cell by his ankles and down three sets of stone steps. His head hit each of the stone steps as he taken away. I found out later that he was denied access to a doctor for three weeks and kept in the punishment cell until his injuries healed.

11. It was common practice by the prison officers to control access to medical treatment particularly if they had beaten a prisoner severely. Effectively they hid the evidence of their wrongdoing by hiding the prisoner. The officers would boast about doing this. For example, they would say "there's three boys down in the punishment blocks now and they have sore faces and where you will all be going is such and such". The whole institution seemed to function under the constant threat of violence and coercion. I knew at the time the way they treated us was wrong, but there was no one I could have complained to and I felt very afraid the entire time I was there.

12. In theory, the officers were supposed to provide access to medical treatment if a prisoner was injured. However, in practice this is not what happened. We were examined by a prison officer, known as a "Medical Officer". This was **HB 6** and the extent of the medical treatment he provided was questionable.

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The prison doctor was [REDACTED] HB 7. If I wanted to see him I had to request this at the beginning of the day by telling one of the prison officers what was wrong with me. I found this embarrassing. The officers would 'triage' the situation and more often than not, I was not allowed to see him. When I eventually did see the doctor there was usually about four other prison officers in the room. There was no privacy or confidentiality and the officers made snide comments about your health in front of you. For example, I remember once having a boil and trying to squeeze it, and one of the prison officers, said "Well, that was f***king smart, you stupid b****d". These exchanges would take place in front of the nurse and [REDACTED] HB 7 but they would never intervene to regulate this behaviour. It was normalised to a degree and no-one ever questioned it.

13. I was released from Hydebank in January 1984 and I was arrested very shortly afterwards for underage drinking. I was sentenced to three months this time and I was taken to Crumlin Road and then Hydebank again. The second experience was just as brutal as the first. I remember being handcuffed and experiencing sectarian abuse from older prisoners on the prison bus during the transfer. This time, I refused to co-operate during induction at Hydebank. The staff held me down and pulled all my clothes off me except for my underpants. There was a female RUC officer present during the handover and I remember trying to hold on to my underpants. I remember hearing her say "Take them off as well" and she kicked me in the stomach. The officers took all my clothing off and processed me in the same way as before. I felt degraded and humiliated by this experience.

14. I remember occasional visits from someone from the Northern Ireland Office. When staff from this Office came in we got enhanced food and the shouting stopped. However, we were still all too afraid to complain. The Red Cross also came in to inspect the prison but we were too frightened to explain what the conditions were really like on a day-to-day basis. I felt very afraid in Hydebank all the time. I was threatened by the staff themselves and by their contacts with loyalist paramilitaries. I felt they singled me out because they perceived me as an anti-establishment figure. One member of staff, [REDACTED] HB 8, told me that I would be "sorted out" when I got out of Hydebank. He was in his 40's with an

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overweight build. I remember his brother later became a [REDACTED]. The constant sectarian comments by the staff created a very oppressive atmosphere.

15. I kept my head down and avoided conflict because I just wanted to complete my sentence. I am sure if I questioned the regime in any way, I would have been beaten half to death. It was common practice for the Prison Officers to arrive on duty drunk. This was both in the morning and the evening. The officers with whom I had contact were from East Belfast and they did not make any attempt to hide their admiration of and loyalty to loyalist paramilitaries. They would boast about being members of the UDA which was not an illegal organisation at that time. There was no segregation among the prisoner populations and approximately two thirds of the young men there were Catholic or from a nationalist background. The prison officers singled out these prisoners and they gave them a particularly hard time. For example, if these inmates addressed their letters home to their parents to County Derry, rather than County Londonderry, they were threatened with being sent to the punishment block.
16. A friend of mine from Hydebank, HB 9, told me he was sexually abused inside the prison by a senior officer, HB 10. HB 9 came from a fiercely loyalist family but we became friends in later life because of our shared experience in Hydebank. He told me that before he went to Hydebank, he was recruited into a junior loyalist gang called the [REDACTED] in the [REDACTED] area. [REDACTED] was the leader of this gang and he groomed boys as young as 15 and farmed them into a paedophile network which included many establishment figures in the [REDACTED] area. He told me that a senior officer inside Hydebank, HB 10, had contacts within this paedophile network. When he was released, these men were waiting for him and his experience of abuse in the outside world was compounded by what happened to him inside Hydebank. He never really recovered from his experiences and took his own life four or five years ago.

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17. I do know of others who were sexually abused at Hydebank, but I never experienced or directly witnessed any sexual abuse myself. The situation for sex offenders in Hydebank was quite different from the usual position of sex offenders in prison. In Hydebank, the sex offenders got preferential treatment. For example, we were locked up for sixteen hours a day, but the sex offenders basically had the run of the place. For example, in hot weather they were allowed out to sun bathe in the prison complex. They had very good relationships with the prison officers and they were all kept in the hospital wing not in a special protection wing.
18. There was no system of education in Hydebank and there was no focus by the prison authorities on rehabilitation of the prisoners. There was a library but there were very few non-fiction books. It was certainly not an educational resource. I didn't receive any sort of educational support while I was there.
19. The impression I got was that the majority of the officers were from a military background and were about my father's age. Some were more brutal than others. There were some very violent men among the staff. One prison officer was from the Republic of Ireland. He used to tell us he was a former member of the parachute regiment and he would joke about being on duty on 'Bloody Sunday'. His nickname was [REDACTED]. Overall, they created a harsh militaristic atmosphere in the prison. I wondered what kind of people they were and what affect maintaining this regime had on them. There was a very much a "dog eat dog" form of control among the prisoners and the staff would turn a blind eye to peer bullying. The behaviours, which were re-enforced by staff, were entirely negative. For example, they encouraged a lack of empathy, lack of conscience, and the use of violence to solve problems. They taught us that "might is right" and that the person holding the stick could do the beating.
20. We were not adequately prepared by the prison authorities for life after prison. For example, about two weeks prior to discharge we were given some social skills training sessions. They were laughable really. For example, the information given to us was that AIDS could only be caught by homosexual contact between males. The prison officer came in and talked to us about their

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favourite alcoholic drinks and their sexual conquests. There was nothing really of substance to prepare young men for a life without re-offending. They did nothing to encourage us not to re-offend and in fact they would openly comment about seeing us back again soon.

21. My parents visited me regularly when I was in Hydebank. I was entitled to one visit per month. In practice, my parents visited me every week. You would send out passes and arrange for a visit on a particular day. The prison officers made it very difficult for me prior to visits and they seemed to single me out for extra rough treatment, for example, I was always strip searched before and after these visits. They put me through all this before I got to see my parents. It was completely unnecessary because the regime in Hydebank was so strict that I never saw any contraband. This was very upsetting for my parents and siblings.

Life After Care

22. When I left Hydebank I was severely traumatised. In total, I was in and out of Hydebank for three short prison sentences during 1983-84. I was brutalised in that environment and unable to cope with life on the outside. Shortly after I was released from the last sentence, I met up with my childhood sweetheart and we started a relationship. With her influence I was able to break the cycle of offending. When I was 20 or 21, I went back to Technical College in [REDACTED] and did two 'A' Levels in one year. I went on to university and took my degree [REDACTED].

23. I am a [REDACTED] now and one of my [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] In later years, I developed an alcohol problem which I attribute to my time in Hydebank. I have been in recovery since 1999, but my relationship with my partner broke down because of my drinking. I have a 20 year old son and my relationship with him is very good.

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24.I am off work present for reasons related to a long term chronic health condition. I talked about what happened to me to a few people [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and I have detailed my experiences [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I have never made a statement to the police about my experiences or taken a civil claim regarding them.

25.It is thirty years or more since I was in Hydebank and although my stays there were short they were very, very sharp. I still have nightmares about being back there and the brutality of that situation. It felt as if you were buried away and no-one would ever listen to you or believe you when you told them your experiences. I think it would be helpful if in the future the treatment of young offenders, particularly any residential or custodial regime was aligned with the science of behaviour by applying the most up to date research based programmes to help these young people rather than the punitive regime I experienced.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed **HIA 373** [REDACTED]

Dated 20-5-2015

17.2. Paragraph 3 – [REDACTED] HB 4 [REDACTED] did work as a Reception Officer. He was an Officer who was well respected by his colleagues, management and other inmates. I have no knowledge that HIA 373 was slapped when he failed to recite his Centre number and follow it with “Sir”. This allegation would be at odds with my knowledge of [REDACTED] HB 4 [REDACTED] who I found to be a professional, committed, dedicated Officer.

17.3. Paragraph 4 – Inmates did mostly have a shower on committal. The shower should have been hot water, given the boilers are in operation 24/7. I cannot explain why this would have been a cold shower. Certainly any solution used would not have been described as delousing. At this time inmates were permitted to wear their own clothing across all NIPS establishments. If inmates could not access their own clothing or afford to purchase clothing then this was provided by the Centre. However, from my recollection the clothing was of an acceptable standard.

17.4. Paragraph 5 – It is true that inmates were issued with personal issue items. Personal possessions were removed and held in storage at Reception. Prisoners were permitted to wear a wedding ring or a watch. It is true that Willow House did operate a committal procedure for recidivist inmates. I do recall [REDACTED] HB 5 [REDACTED] worked in that area for a period whilst I was at

³¹ Exhibit 6 - Information to Committals (full information pack)

HIA REF: [HB4]
NAME: [HB 4]
DATE: [2nd November 2015]

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

Witness Statement of **HB 4**

I, **HB 4**, will say as follows: -

1. I worked in Hydebank for approximately 4-5 years and I would have been there in 1983-4. I have no recollection of **HIA 373**. I deny that I ever slapped him or anyone else. I did work in Reception for a period of time and I did the induction when the prisoners arrived. This involved assigning them their prison numbers and arranging for showers / haircuts as necessary. I have an authoritative voice and I would have shouted if necessary to keep order, but I never needed to slap anyone. I continue to have a good relationship with any ex-offenders that I meet.
- 2.
- 3.

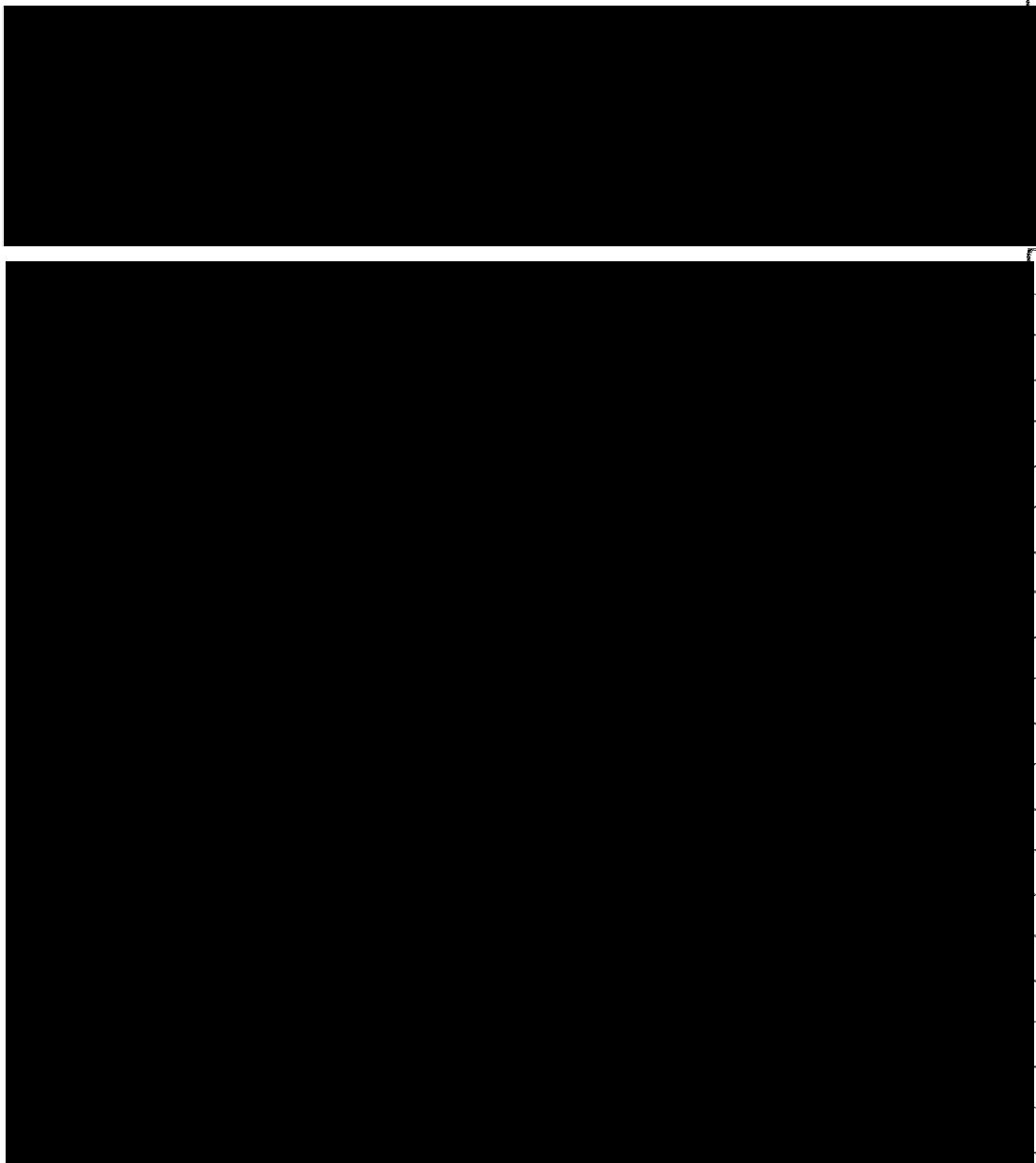
Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed

HB 4

Dated 2nd November 2015

Information and Communication

3.05 The reception unit was housed in clean and airy premises where the staff carried out the reception procedures quickly and efficiently with due regard for the dignity of the inmates. All new arrivals were examined by a hospital officer, who called in the Medical Officer immediately if he was needed; otherwise the MO examined them on the second day. The provision of inmate facilities was excellent and reception procedures were usually completed in an hour.

4.06 Twelve vocational training courses covered subjects as diverse as bricklaying, hairdressing and catering. The workshop accommodation was generally good and the courses were equipping inmates to acquire City and Guild certificates. However they were considerably under-subscribed. There were 114 places available but only 71 inmates were undergoing training and some of those were serving sentences so short that they would be unable to complete the course. We did not consider this a proper use of resources. We have advised the Northern Ireland Office to review the number and type of vocational training courses on offer.

4.07 The physical education department was very successful in involving all inmates in a well organised, varied and imaginative programme, which emphasised personal achievement. The range of activities available varied from work in the gymnasium, through competitive sports to endurance and adventure training in the Mourne Mountains. Home and away football fixtures in a local league, and preparation for an international Scout Jamboree were other notable features. Over 260 external awards, including 18 Duke of Edinburgh Bronze medals were gained by inmates in the first half of 1982. We were most impressed by the quality of work, the enthusiasm of staff, the excellent provision of facilities and the attention given to the individual needs of inmates and their personal safety.

Assessment of Inmates' Needs and Progress

4.10 As we have previously mentioned, the centre was required to have a system of progression through the houses. All inmates were placed in Elm House after reception, where they were observed and assessed during the induction period. The duration of an inmate's stay in Elm House depended partly on individual effort and partly on the number of further receptions waiting to move in, but at an appropriate time he would be transferred to Willow House. Movement from Willow House to Cedar, Cedar to Beech and Beech to Ash was decided by the Labour Allocation Board on the basis of assessments from all staff who had dealt with an inmate, and took account of the inmate's own wishes. Each house had a progressively more relaxed regime and privileges such as longer association times. The high point in the progression was 'red band' (trusted orderly) status on the top floor of Ash House; assessment for this position of trust was the responsibility of a special board chaired by an official from the Northern Ireland Office.

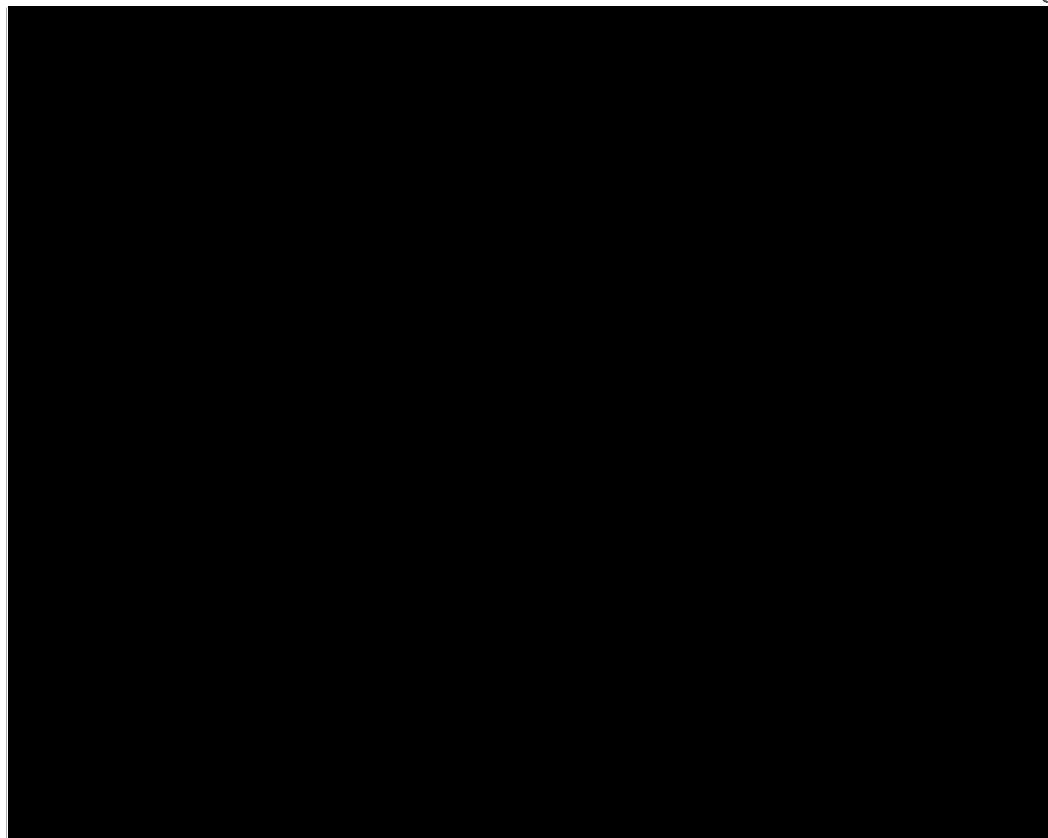
Hydebank. Again, I can only describe [REDACTED] HB 5 [REDACTED] as a professional Officer. I am not aware of any complaints about his performance.

17.5. Paragraph 6 – I do not accept that the regime was designed to break anybody's spirit. Certainly I do accept that the committal regime did require inmates to conform. This was a pre-requisite to inmates advancing in the progressive regime at Hydebank and gaining maximum benefit from participation in the range of activities. I do not accept that inmates were locked in a cell 16 hours a day during my time. I have no knowledge of inmates being routinely slapped on the face or the head. Any Officer found assaulting or misusing force against an inmate would be subject to disciplinary procedures and could potentially lose their job as a consequence.

17.6. Paragraph 7 – The working day in Hydebank commenced at 8.00am with prisoners being woken at just after 7.00am. As mentioned previously, in the early 1980's prisoners did make bed blocks. Cell inspections were routine. In all the time that I worked in Hydebank I never witnessed cells being wrecked.

17.7. Paragraph 9 – I accept inmates on committal did carry out menial tasks which included a lot of cleaning, mainly to establish a routine and to encourage a work ethic. This was also intended to establish adherence to the disciplinary requirements. However, during this period the inmates were also subject to assessment for a future Labour Allocation Board. They would have had access to Probation, Teachers, Healthcare, Gymnasium and Workshops. Following a period in the committal landing the inmates routinely transferred to other houses from where they attended activities. During committal periods the lockup time was earlier than the remainder of the Centre although I cannot confirm that it was 7.30pm.

17.8. Paragraph 10 – During my time at Hydebank from October 1984 I certainly have no recollection of routine serious incidents or cell barricades. As indicated earlier in this statement, if inmates failed to comply with the



Material Needs

3.10 We sampled the food and watched it being served several times during our inspection. The standard of catering was good with varied menus and consistently well prepared and wholesome food. The serving was efficiently done with heated trolleys taking food to the houses where each floor had its own dining room. The food arrived hot, and in good condition.

3.11 We were less impressed with the kitchen in which the meals were produced. Although well equipped, clean and tidy, the layout, design and construction were unsatisfactory. The wet and slippery floor presented a particular hazard. The changing areas for inmates and staff were also poor. Cooked and uncooked meats were kept in the same coldroom; we advised, for reasons of health and hygiene, that separate provision be made. The kitchen was, otherwise, well managed.

3.12 The hospital, which occupied a separate block near the main gate, had two four-bedded wards, four single rooms with integral sanitation, and a protected room. There were also consulting and treatment rooms, a dental surgery and an X-ray room. The provision of equipment was generous. The hospital was manned by a full-time Medical Officer, eight members of the hospital grades and a nursing sister. This staffing level was ample, and local NHS hospitals gave full support with consultants visiting when necessary. Emergency cover was provided by a rota of local general practitioners.

3.13 The staff worked with dedication and enthusiasm. They were sensitive to the risk of inmates attempting suicide and any potential suicides were closely monitored. There was an impressive level of remedial physical

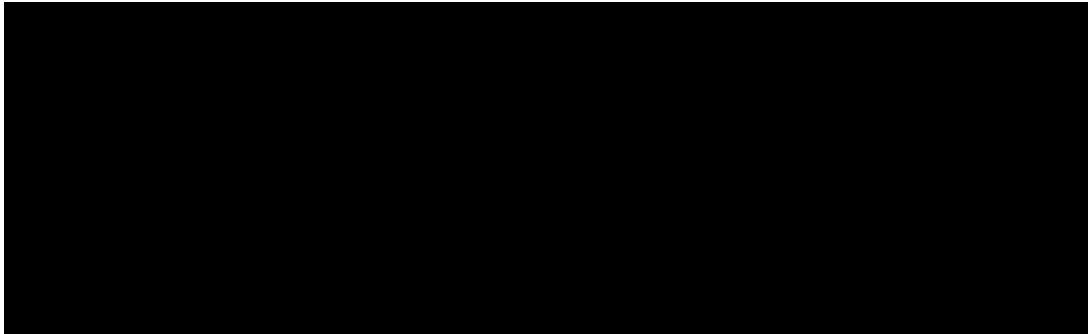
discipline within the Centre they were removed to the Punishment Unit as it was called in those days and were subject to Governors disciplinary procedures. I do not accept that inmates were assaulted. Indeed I would argue that given that the Punishment Unit was visible from the main corridor at Hydebank, I am confident that if such behaviour happened other staff or managers would have witnessed it. There are a range of allegations contained in paragraph 10 of which I would have no knowledge.

17.9. Paragraph 11 – I do not accept that there was any opportunity for staff to hide “a prisoner.” Members of the Visiting Committee, Managers and others routinely had access to all areas of the Centre. Such behaviour would not have been acceptable or condoned.

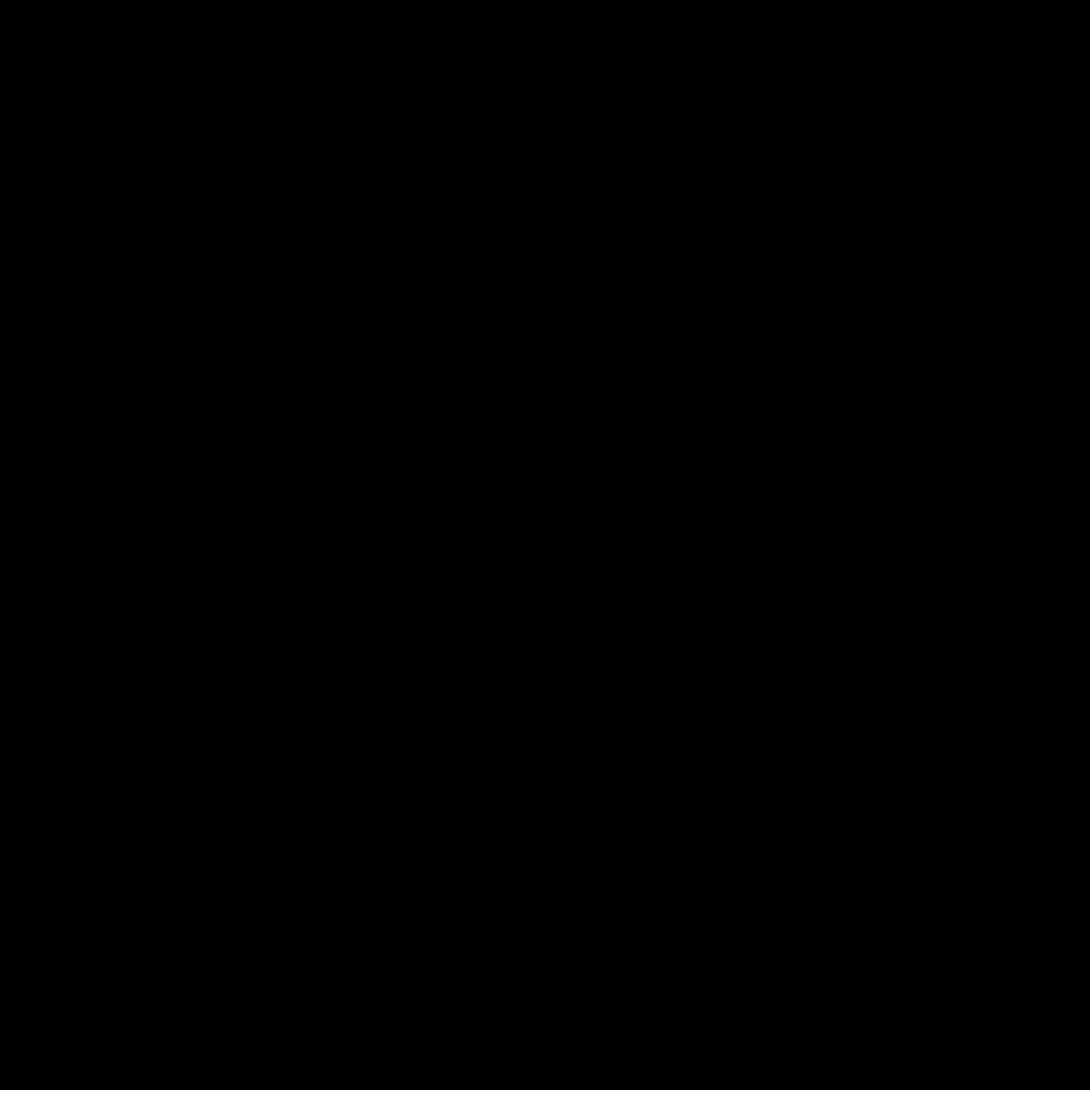
17.10. Paragraph 12 – Hospital Officer **HB 6** was known to me. He was an exceptionally competent Hospital Officer. I do not know a **HB 7**. However, I do know that the medical practice in place at the time were from a GP Practice on the [REDACTED]. I do not accept that Prison Officers were routinely present whilst an inmate was subject to a medical examination unless there were particular concerns about the inmate’s behaviour.

17.11. Paragraph 13 – As the reception area is accessible from the main corridor, opposite the administration building, and given doors were routinely left ajar in my time in Hydebank, I do not accept that the incidents as outlined in paragraph 13 could have taken place with a RUC Female Officer kicking an inmate in the stomach.

17.12 [REDACTED]



education, which was particularly helpful in the treatment of inmates who had suffered gunshot wounds prior to their arrest. In all, we considered that the standard of medical care provided to inmates was excellent.



17.13. Paragraph 15 – I have no knowledge of staff being linked to Loyalist Paramilitaries. During my time I cannot recollect any allegations of Officers discriminating against particular sections of the population. Indeed, I can confirm that during my period in Hydebank, I had no reports of sectarian behavior between inmates or between staff and inmates.

17.14. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

17.15 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

17.16. [REDACTED]

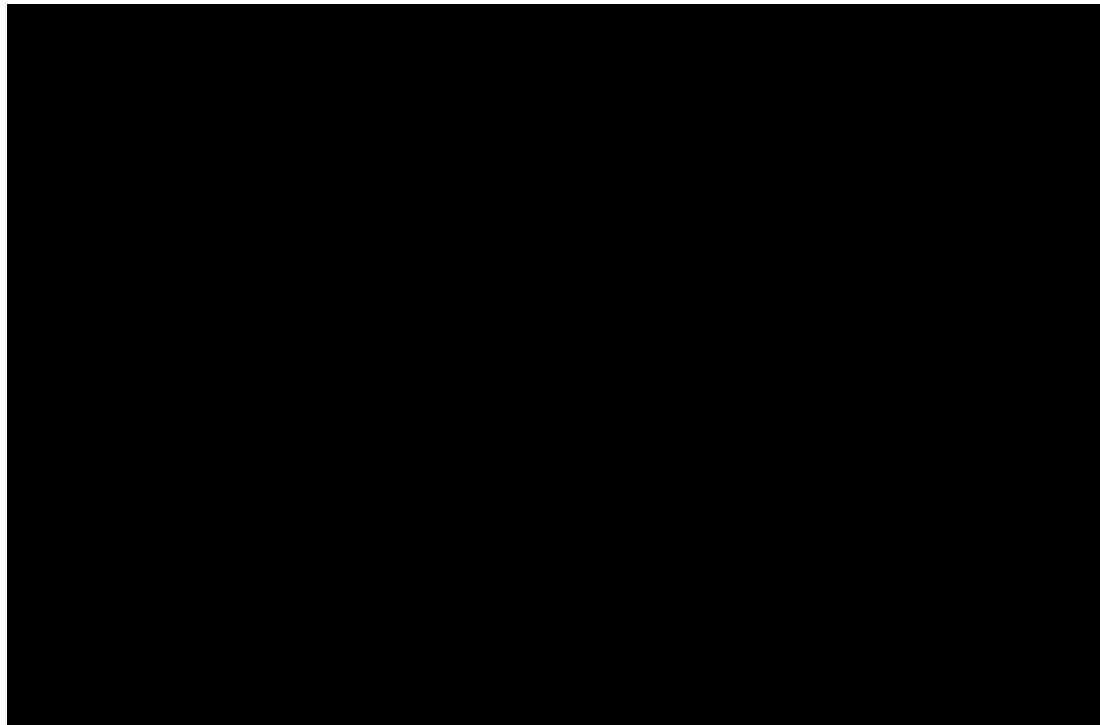
[REDACTED]

17.17. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

17.18 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



Education and Training

4.03 The Education Officer, who was supported by six full-time and eight part-time teachers, worked in a purpose built, well equipped education centre. The education staff were well integrated into the life of the establishment, and were involved in several separate education schemes; daytime education known as the "Youthways Programme", evening classes (both recreational and in support of vocational training courses), a separate programme for the boys in the Remand Unit and an innovative social skills programme.

4.04 The Youthways programme was based upon a scheme used throughout Northern Ireland, and was well adapted to the particular needs of the Young Offenders Centre. It consisted of separate full time courses for those inmates needing remedial help, for those not yet ready for vocational training, and for those whose sentences were too short to undertake a vocational training course. Teaching was geared to meet individual needs at standards ranging from remedial instruction to 'O' level preparation.

4.05 The social skills courses were run by prison officers in a small unit closely connected with the Education Department. The intention was to develop the skills of communication and self sufficiency necessary for a smooth transition back to the community for inmates who might experience particular difficulty. The course we saw in progress was clearly effective and the inmates involved seemed to enjoy the experience. This unit also ran pre-release courses, and a four day alcohol awareness programme. Attendance at these courses was largely voluntary, but they were over-subscribed. We regarded the work of this unit as being of great value to the inmates and through the involvement of prison officers, valuable to the service. We felt that the approach could, with advantage, be adopted in other young offender centres in England and Wales.

18 Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Medals. The Report comments, "we were very impressed by the quality of work, the enthusiasm of staff, the excellent provision of facilities and the attention given to the individual needs of inmates and their personal safety".

17.19. Paragraph 19 – I did not know of any Prison Officer with the name [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Some Officers may have had a military background but I do not accept that this had any bearing on how they carried out their duties. Staff were trained to undertake the role of Prison Officer. Their background before that is irrelevant. I do not agree with the negative comments made within paragraph 19.

17.20. Paragraph 20 – I note HMCIP comments made on the Social Skills Course.

I find this to be a very challenging programme which was highly valued by inmates particularly those approaching release. Indeed the 1983 HMCIP Report stated, "the course we saw in progress was clearly effective and the inmates involved seemed to enjoy the experience. This Unit also ran pre-release courses, and a 4 day Alcohol Awareness Programme. Attendance at these courses were largely voluntary but were oversubscribed. We regarded the work of this Unit as being of great value to the inmates and through the involvement of Prison Officers, valuable to the Service. We felt that the approach could, with advantage, be adapted in other Young Offender Centres in England and Wales". This assessment agrees with my own knowledge and assessment of how Social Skills was received when I was at Hydebank.

17.21. Paragraph 21 – As mentioned earlier in this statement inmates were searched going to and from the Visits Room to deter the trafficking of contraband. Such practice continues even today.

18. [REDACTED]