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ASSOCIATION FOR LEGAL JUSTICE
INTERNMENT) - NORTHERN IRELAND 1971

REPORT ON ARREST, INTERROGATION AND TREATMENT OF:



Age: 27

Occupation: School Teacher

"I was educated at a Grammar School in Co. Tyrone and taught for 18 months in England before training. I completed the Training Course in England and obtained a teaching post in Co. Tyrone.

I joined the Civil Rights Association and worked with that Association in a moderate manner. I worked in the Development Commission contacting outsiders in selling in Tyrone, Fermanagh and Armagh. The work was voluntarily done - I received no wages, expenses only. I did the work in the evenings after school until the holidays. During July and the first week of August my journeys took me through Connaught, Leinster, part of Munster and Ulster. During five weeks of these journeys I secured £3,000 worth of orders. I returned home some weekends.

I was arrested at about 4.30 a.m. on Monday 9 August, 1971. British military personnel knocked at the door of my home. My mother spoke to them. She came down to my room and told me the Military were at the door, military from Armagh I think. I pulled on my trousers and went to the door and said "Good morning", thinking it was a search. I did not know of any reason why they should search my house. I was asked if I was [redacted] to which I replied "Yes." The soldier said, "I have come to arrest you under the Civil Powers Act 1920." I said, "Arrest me; what for?" and he said, "I have come to arrest you, you have ten minutes to get your clothes on." He followed me into the house but waited in the kitchen. There was panic in the house. No search was made. When I was ready he asked me had I got a coat because it was cold outside. I did not resist arrest at all.

On the way to an army lorry which was parked outside my home, I again asked why I was being arrested and the answer was the same as before, "under the Special Powers Act - I cannot tell you any more." I asked him where I was being taken to and he said, "our H.Q. at Armagh." On the way into Pomeroy the Officer told me that at an assembly point he would have to do a documentation and take photographs. We stopped at a cross-roads $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from Pomeroy at dawn and they took me out of the landrover and produced a document in triplicate. I was asked for my name, address, date of birth, occupation, height, colour of hair, eyes and was told that it still was not light enough to take photographs. The officer contacted his headquarters saying he had picked up Number Another armoured vehicle drew up and on checking with his office and radioed that they had No..... or I'm not sure which and that they were awaiting the arrival of, he used a code number here. I waited ten minutes. A military landrover and lorry arrived and there was a "prisoner" in the landrover. Myself and the "prisoner" were brought to the lorry and put inside, with a third "prisoner" who was already there. The "prisoners" were [redacted] and [redacted] Pomeroy. I was surprised to see them. One was a member of a C.R. Committee and the other a sympathiser. Each of us "prisoners" had two escorts who sat on either side of us, each wielding a large baton ready for use. About five minutes later the officer decided there was enough light to take photographs and each of us was taken from the lorry and photographed in the presence of the soldier who had arrested us. We were then put back into the lorry with our escorts on either side. I asked if I could smoke and was told, "yes, but you are not to talk to each other."

Two armed guards sat at the rear of the lorry with rifles at the ready. The lorry was driven to a crossroads about halfway between Pomeroy and Dungannon. We stopped at the side of the road where there were other military vehicles and after about five minutes a further two vehicles approached from Cookstown. Two "prisoners" were taken from these vehicles and put into our lorry. We were not allowed to speak to them. At this stage I was pushed off the seat and told to sit on a knapsack on the floor of the lorry and the lorry was driven off towards Dungannon. On the way a soldier reprimanded two of the "prisoners" for speaking to one another but the officer told him that we could talk if we wished.

On the arrival at Armagh at about 6.15 each "prisoner" with his two escorts was taken from the lorry and lined up against the wall. In turn we were brought to a camera on a tripod but when my turn came my escort stated that I had already been photographed and I was taken to stand against another wall. An officer from a window nearby asked my escort to state my number to which the reply was "....six." He was then instructed to bring me to the NAAFI. We were taken to a large room with seating arranged along these walls. Two obviously high ranking officers sat behind tables at the fourth wall and in turn each "prisoner" was called before either one of these who examined the documents which had been completed at the road check point earlier. He appeared to sign these forms in a couple of places. I glanced at my form as he completed it and saw him enter the name of [REDACTED], from which I presumed I was to be interrogated by a detective called [REDACTED]. I asked one of my escorts, "What now?" and he said, "You go to one more room and then home." I said, "Home!" to which he replied, "Yes, home." I said, "and what is the purpose of this whole exercise?" His reply was, "I don't know, mate (Cockney accent), I'm just doing a bloody job."

On instructions, my escorts brought me to another room in which were four double bunk beds and six chairs and a bench. We sat down and soon five other "prisoners" joined us. The room was about 25' x 12'. Other "prisoners" asked what was going to happen now but none of our escorts seemed to know until an officer arrived and said, "BRING 'EM OUT." We were then brought to another lorry which already contained about ten soldiers armed with batons and rifles. Seven "prisoners" were put into the back of this lorry and since I was last on I again had to sit on the floor as did the "prisoner" before me. One soldier at the rear of the lorry and an officer who had been standing on the ground went to a loading bay where they fitted what I think were magazines, the soldier to his rifle, the officer to a sub-machine gun. They then sat at the rear of the lorry, the rifle pointed out - the sub-machine gun pointed into the lorry - YOU DARE NOT MOVE! I overheard the officer mention Ballykinlar which I knew to be a military camp. The officer then shouted to the driver, "Off as fast as you can go." There was another lorry in front, obviously carrying "prisoners." On the way, some soldiers slept or dozed but the two at the rear of the lorry were wide awake. There were no objections if we talked or smoked. We arrived in Ballykinlar at about 9.30 a.m. five hours after our arrest. We had had nothing to eat. Our escorts lined us up on a roadway on either side of which were several green huts approximately 60 x 20. FROM HERE MILITARY POLICE TOOK OVER.

We were brought to a paddock between Hut A and Hut B which was surrounded by four rows of coiled, barbed wire, outside which two soldiers stood with rifles at the ready. We were told to take our belongings out of our pockets and put them on the ground. We were lined up against the wall with our arms stretched upwards, our feet wide apart and we were then frisked down carefully and methodically. After ensuring that we carried no weapons we were told to pick up our belongings and sit on the grass facing the wall. After about five minutes we were taken into Hut B and ordered to sit on the floor - a wooden floor with about 1/2" black dust on it with our backs to the wall. There were now about twenty of us in this room with five Military Police.

The Staff sgt. on arrival found that most men were smiling and ordered us to remove the grins, everybody laughed. He then shouted, "STAND UP, TAKE ONE PAGE FORWARD, TURN AROUND, FACE THE FRONT, FACE YOUR FUCKING FRONT, SIT DOWN, FEET STRETCHED OUT TO TOUCH THE WALL. KEEP YOUR KNEES STRAIGHT, FACE THE FUCKING FRONT."

One man not understanding the cockney accent faced the wrong way and got a bang on the head. All you heard was a thud. The obvious reason for making us face the wall and look straight at it was to ensure that no "prisoner's" eyes witnessed an assault on any other "prisoner." We were put through tortuous exercises until 2.00 p.m.

These exercises included sitting on the hard dirty floor, facing the wall with our arms stretched upwards. Military police ensured that no one's arms sagged. This exercise lasted 10 - 15 minutes. Another one was sitting on the floor as before with arms clasped behind the head with your head raided. A third exercise was lying on your back, hands clasped behind your head. Another one was kneeling on the floor hands above your head or behind your head.

We were also forced to kneel on the floor with your head down to touch the floor and your hands clasped behind your back at the waist, and the hands must be at the waist. One man refused to kneel down and was brutally assaulted.

Whether you were physically fit to do it or not everyone was forced to and if someone refused or broke down on the exercise he was brutally forced to do it, and the others made to carry on with the exercise much longer. Naturally "prisoners" conformed, not so much to obey their brutal torturers, but to ensure that the morale of their fellow "prisoners" remained high.

THESE EXERCISES COMMENCED AT 10.00 a.m. AND LASTED UNTIL 2.00 p.m., four hours of torture.

At 2.00 p.m. we were ordered to sit on the floor facing the wall and the staff sgt. instructed us that "SWILL was now being served," and from here "if any mugs or spoons are missing or broken you'll get no more food." Soldiers brought each "prisoner" a large mug which contained about $\frac{1}{2}$ pint of thick gravy, a few small pieces of meat and about 10 beans and 10 peas - all well mixed up, which they called stew. Few "prisoners" could eat it. We were also served $\frac{1}{2}$ mug of cold sweet tea and one slice of dry bread. When finished we were told to place our mug and spoon behind our back, but not to look around. These were then collected and we were told we could smoke one cigarette, but before I was finished mine a military policeman ordered cigarettes and pipes out. He told us "some fucking bastard has kept his spoon." I visualized someone saving his spoon to dig his way out of Ballykinlar and unfortunately my sense of humour got the better of me and I smiled. I was rewarded with a fierce kick in the behind. We were asked to produce the spoon. Naturally no one did since no one had it. We were then told to stand against the wall as before with our feet wide apart and well back and each person was searched in turn. When this was finished we were ordered to sit down and remove our shoes and socks, and these were also carefully checked for the spoon, but no spoon was found. I know this since I was second last to be searched and I kept a careful glance on the last man to see if he had it.

The exercises were then resumed with intensity, especially in duration and these continued until 6.00 p.m. when we were brought two sandwiches, one grated cheese, the other a slice of spam. The bread was dry. We also got $\frac{1}{2}$ a cup of tea.

At intervals during the day names of individual "prisoners" were called out and they were brought from the room. My turn came at about 7.00 p.m. and I was brought to another hut called "Reception Centre." Inside this were two R.W.C. Inspectors, one plain clothes, possibly a detective, also sat at the desk. A corporal ordered me to stand against the wall while he photographed me with an instamatic camera. My photo was pinned on my documentation sheets which had been brought from Armagh. I was asked again for name, address, etc. as

before. I asked if I could question the officer in charge and was told I'd see someone in about twenty minutes who could give me any information I desired.

During the day if anyone wished to go to the toilet he had to ask permission from the Military Police and when an escort was available he was asked "was it a 'piss' or a 'crap'?" If the former we were brought to a spot midway between two huts where a hole about 3' square and 3' deep had been dug. If the latter, we were brought to a hut especially designed for the purpose. None of these had doors and your escort stood at the door until you had finished. There was no opportunity to wash after being to the toilet.

On a visit to the toilet during the day I noticed that security personnel included R.U.C. constables and a couple of sgts. I was brought behind a curtain in Reception Centre, and asked to place all my belongings on the table. An officer examined the lapels of the coat and examined my pockets and I was told to remove all articles of clothing except my underpants. I was then escorted in underpants behind a second curtain to the Medical Officer. He was a military doctor, and he asked me if I had any medical ailments. I mentioned my ulcer and was asked if I had any medical tablets with me. He gave me tablets to relieve my pain, which had now been almost unbearable as a result of the exercises and virtual starvation. He asked me if I had any complaints about the treatment I had received to date and I complained about the torture exercises and the lack of food. His reply was, "This is a fucking military camp, not Butlins, mate." After medical examination I was told to put on my clothes, but I was not allowed my handkerchief or tie. I asked for my handkerchief and the reply was, "What do you want a fucking handkerchief for?"

My escort brought me to Room No. 3 for questioning. This was another hut with one large table, two chairs behind and one in front. I was allowed to sit down and this was an immense relief. This was about 8.00 p.m. A detective arrived in, special branch I would say, who produced a form and asked me for my name, address, occupation, and so on. Where I lived, who I lived with, father's name, age and occupation, Mother's name, etc, brothers, same, sisters, same details, even married sisters. Was I married or single. If going steady or engaged, fiancée's name and address. When I had given these details I asked him to explain why I was in Ballykinlar and if I was going to be kept there. His reply was, "I've never seen you before, I know nothing about you, but there must be some reason." I asked him who could give me the answers to the above questions and he replied "possibly some of your local police; this is a military operation." I can't help you." I told him that there was no reason why I should be here, I demanded that I be released immediately or that a police officer to whom I was known be brought and that I wanted a solicitor. I felt that I had a right to have a legal representative present. My military escort replied that, "You've got no fucking rights, mate." (I could identify this fellow again; a staff sgt., provided he was in uniform.) I was then escorted back to Hut A where I joined with the others in exercises which had never ceased during my absence. These continued during the night with periodic rest periods of lying on the floor with hands by your sides. Individuals were called away, but exercises continued until I was called again and escorted back to Room 3. On entering the room I was greeted by detective [redacted], whom I knew from two previous meetings [redacted] earlier this year. I honestly felt pleased to see someone whom I knew on the other side of the table because I felt that since we both knew one another he would be compelled to treat me with the respect I deserved as a decent citizen. I expressed this feeling to him and he told me that he had been instructed to come here at MY REQUEST. At no time had I asked for [redacted]. I pointed this out to him and he then said, "Well, actually it was [redacted] who was to come to see you, (he was until recently the local sgt. R.U.C. where I live) but he is in hospital as he was injured tonight in Dungannon" I said, "Please explain the reasons for my presence in Ballykinlar." He said, "So you know it is Ballykinlar." He then explained to me that Faulkner had "regretably" introduced internment and that things outside were very bad, many people having lost lives.

Again I asked him if he knew why I was interned and he said, "No, I have no idea, it was the military who arrested you, and they do not seem to have good method." I said, "But, why me? There is no reason why I should be in and I could not possibly be known to the military." His reply was, "Well, a lot of documents were found in a raid in Kildress last week. Maybe your name was on some of these." I asked where had these been found and he said, "on the premises of [redacted] do you know him?" I said I knew a lot of people with this name, and he said that the one arrested last week had guns and ammunition and documents relating to jobs to be done, and people's names. These included diagrams of policemen's homes. I would have grave doubts about all this. I asked him for a cigarette and he got a packet and came back with one. He told me that time was 3.35 a.m. I had been 24 hours without sleep. But morale was still high. I said I had no connection with the but if you can produce a document and name I'll do service, 10 years, 15 years, 20 years inside, but I don't want to do one day when you have nothing on me. He said "If there is nothing then what about the Republican Club." I said, "What Republican Club?" He said, "The Republican Club in Fomeroy." I said, "Is there one?" He said, "You're the local [redacted] you should know. I replied that there is not and has not been for many years a Republican Club in Fomeroy." He said, "Do you know anyone who is a member?" and I replied, "How would I, since there is NO CLUB." I was interrogated until 4.30 - 4.45 a.m.

I was taken back to Hut C. Inside were a number of "prisoners" sitting on the floor, door barred behind us and no military police present. We could talk, walk around, sit or sleep on the bare dirty floor without any blankets, if you were capable of sleeping while dogs growled and barked outside and the huts rattled on continuously and the doors kicked. At intervals until about 6.00 p.m. others were put into the room until there were 20 in all. Morale among "prisoners" was very high. Many complained of aches and pains and wondered what was happening to their homes and families. One fellow mentioned that Special Branch officers offered him safe conduct out of the country if he would name people involved in I.R.A. activities and all the money he would ever need at a rate of £5.00 a round for ammunition and £100.00 per weapon. This man laughed and said he was sorry he could not oblige.

On Tuesday evening, 10 August, my name was called along with eleven others and we were escorted by one officer to reception. On the way I overheard him remark to another military policeman that he was going to check us out. We were lined up outside reception and the first one went in and he came out the back way and I saw no more of him. When I was taken in the Police Officer whom I had seen the night before asked my name, etc., again, and compared them with a ledger. My belongings were placed on the table and checked by a second R.U.C. man. A third R.U.C. man said, "Hed it, he's not getting out," and called on the M.P. to take me back to Block B where I had to resume the torture exercises.

About ten minutes after resuming the torture exercises my name was called again and I was brought to a small private room and left alone and completely unguarded. Some ten minutes later I was joined by five other "prisoners" and on several occasions our names were taken again and a number of officers held private conferences. These officers belonged to the R.U.C. and Military Police. Two of the boys were taken away and again questioned by Special Branch, then returned to join us. It was at this stage we were told about the bribes. Before breakfast on Tuesday we were forced to do running exercises outside on the road - run, stop, turn, etc. These I think were to make an independent character "obey." We were escorted for a wash - cold water and a type of soap I had never seen before. There was one towel between the lot.

For breakfast we had a fried egg sandwich and one mug between two "prisoners." After breakfast we had to do more exercises, same as Monday, only more kneeling. At about mid-day I asked for permission

to go to the toilet, and when there I looked at my knees; both knees were badly skinned and one was seeping water and blood.

On release on Tuesday, my family were shocked at my state and barely recognised me. I had two days' growth of beard and my clothes were filthy. We had not been allowed to put our hand to our face or hair; if you did you got a "thud."

To the best of my knowledge the information which I have given above is a true and accurate account of what happened.

Signature: [REDACTED] Witness: [REDACTED]

August 14th, 1971

Date: