

Department of Psychiatry  
University College  
Cork  
Ireland



Roinn na Siciatrachta  
Coláiste na hOllscoile  
Corcaigh  
Éire

Professor: R. J. Daly, M.A., M.D.,  
M.R.C.Psych., D.P.M., M.R.C.P.(Edin.)

*All correspondence to be addressed to: St. Stephen's Hospital, Sarsfieldscourt, Cork. (Tel. 021-54388)*

Private and Confidential  
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18th March, 1977.

Mr. Sean Donlon,  
Assistant Secretary,  
Department of Foreign Affairs,  
Dublin.  
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Dear Sean,

Re: Proposed Statement by Royal College of Psychiatrists.  
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I thought you might be interested in this document and I also am sending a copy to Declan Quigley. This statement is about to be published having been recently passed by the Royal College of Psychiatrists Council Meeting in London. They did not consult me about it and I learnt of it only by accident. I understand that the leading Irish contributor to the discussion was Dr. Des McGrath, who as you know works closely with Dr. Leigh. I would criticise it on the following grounds.

1. They did not bother to inform themselves adequately about the psychiatric aspects although they knew that Bastiaans and myself had first hand information regarding the effects, events that occurred, etc. They also incidently omit my (widely publicised) paper in the U.S. from the references.
2. They imply that psychiatrists were not involved, although I have documented otherwise.
3. They minimise the scale of the operation at the three holding centres. Implying it was all casual and accidental, as opposed to the large scale carefully planned operation, which it was.
4. They imply it was an "experiment" when it was known to be the use of a technique widely practised in other areas already over many years.

over/.....

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5. They say that half the hooded-men were I.R.A. men.
6. They say "no visible injuries" were noted on hooded-men.
7. They say that the victims were examined by psychiatrists "on behalf of the Republican Movement".

The latter I regard as a serious professional slander and a deliberate further smear on myself and Bastiaans. We have taken considerable professional punishment already and I would appreciate your help in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RJD'.

R. J. DALY.

RJD/EF

Encl.



PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE  
REPORT TO COUNCIL: 16 MARCH 1977

\*Item 1

\*1. BRITISH ARMY TORTURE IN NORTHERN IRELAND IN 1971

X Following the publication of the Report of the European Commission of Human Rights on the investigation of the interrogation procedures used by the British Army on civilians in Northern Ireland the Public Policy Committee has considered the implications for medical practitioners and in particular for psychiatrists. Whilst there is no evidence in the Commission's report (or in the earlier British Government inquiries) that any psychiatrists were involved, the Committee recommend publication of the following statement :-

X *The Royal College of Psychiatrists notes that the British Government has been found guilty by the European Commission of Human Rights of planned torture (including the use of five deep interrogation techniques) on interned individuals in Northern Ireland in August 1971.\* As a body with members working in the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, and other countries throughout the world and having regard to the fact that the techniques used were based on <sup>published</sup> ~~applied~~ psychological studies this Royal College proclaims its repugnance to these activities.*

*The Royal College considers that no doctor should associate himself with the planning, conduct, or supervision of torture and advises its Members and Fellows accordingly and would support any Member or Fellow who followed this advice.*

The accompanying memorandum, prepared by Dr David Clark (PPC 5/77), summarises the events which led to the Strasbourg verdict. We have been in correspondence with the British Psychological Society, the British Medical Association and the General Medical Council and recommend that the statement (if adopted) should be passed on to them.

7/3/77

Brian Ward  
Honorary Secretary

\*European Commission of Human Rights: Application No 5310/71  
Ireland against the United Kingdom of Great Britain and  
Northern Ireland: Report of the Commission (Adopted on 25/1/76)  
Strasbourg.

*deep breath & counsel. Any other matter refers  
PPC 14/77*

British Army Torture in Northern Ireland 1971

The Republic of Ireland brought a case against the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland before the European Commission of Human Rights. The first submission was in December 1971; hearings started in 1973 and continued through 1974. The Commission (of 14 members) reported in 1975 and its report was adopted on 25th January 1976. Copion of the report (of 563 pages) became available in October 1976. A further 14 volumes of verbatim records (over 4,500 pages) are said to be available.

A great deal of these reports are taken up with complex legal issues, such as whether the U.K. Government had authority to apply widespread detention (the Commission decided that they had) and whether they had shown discrimination in their activities (the Commission decided that there was no evidence of discrimination). Of particular interest to psychiatrists is the discussion of the "Five Techniques" (p.389-402) (hooding, wall standing, noise, deprivation of food and water and deprivation of sleep). They concluded:-

"The Commission is of the opinion, by a unanimous vote, that the continued use of the five techniques in the cases before it constituted a practice of inhuman treatment and torture in breach of Article 3 of the Convention (of Human Rights)."

The U.K. Government team of lawyers led by Sir Peter Rawlinson fought vigorously to avoid this verdict. They said that the matter did not fall within the Commission's jurisdiction; they said that since the U.K. Government had stopped the practices (in 1972) there was no point in enquiring into the matter. They refused to produce any of the torturers as witnesses. They insisted that their psychiatrists, brought in to refute Professor Daly and Professor Bastiaans, should be anonymous. These anonymous psychiatrists said that chronic anxiety states and depression, for which Pat Shivers and others had already received large sums in compensation from the U.K. Government in Belfast High Courts in 1974, were merely due to the anxieties of living in Belfast during the troubles.

For anyone interested in studying details of the story the main readily available sources of information are:-

1. The Report of the European Commission of Human Rights published 25 January 1976.
2. The Compton Report ("Report of the Enquiry into Allegations against the Security Forces of Physical Brutality in Northern Ireland arising out of the events on the 9th August 1971").
3. The Parker Report ("Report of a Committee of Privy Councillors appointed to consider authorised procedures for the Interrogation of Persons Suspected of Terrorism").

4. "The Guinea Pigs" by John McGuffin, written by an avowed I.R.A. supporter.

It seems reasonable, therefore, that any facts accepted in all these documents are likely to be true. The story appears to be as follows:-

In the Summer of 1971 the U.K. Government decided to introduce internment into Northern Ireland and on the 9th August some 342 people were arrested and placed in Internment Camps. There was a fair amount of brutality, incompetence and mal-administration in this operation but nothing out of the usual. A few weeks later, however, news began to leak out that a small group of people had had some "special treatment", as a result of which they were nervous wrecks. These reports led to newspaper exposures and Parliamentary enquiries, which led to the setting up of the Compton Committee and, when that proved unsatisfactory to Parliament, of the Parker Committee. It seems that some twelve people were picked out of the main groups of internees and were taken to a secret site where they were subjected to a special experiment in "sensory deprivation". Hoods were placed over their heads, they were made to stand against a wall for considerable lengths of time (an average of 20 hours with a maximum for one man of 43 hours) and subjected to special "white noise" which made them feel confused. They were allowed to have some bread and water to eat and to urinate but otherwise were kept in these positions by physical coercion and intermittently interrogated at length about their involvement in terrorist activities. Of the twelve about half were I.R.A. men, half were not; all were comparatively young and fit and were medically examined before the sensory deprivation began. At the end of the experiment they were examined again and photographs were taken of them front and rear to establish that there were no visible physical injuries. Doctors were involved in examining these people before and after.

There has been no more talk of such practices since Lord Gardiner's unequivocal condemnation of them in his minority report to the Parker Report - "procedures which were secret, illegal, not morally justifiable and alien to the traditions of what I still believe to be the greatest democracy of the world" - and the Government of the day forbade their further use.

Since the experiment the men have had various fates - some were released, some are still in internment, some have made a fair recovery from the incident but some say that they have been left permanently damaged psychologically. They have been examined by psychiatrists, both on behalf of the Army and on behalf of the Republican Movement. In 1974 the British Government awarded Patrick Shivers £15,000 in his case against the Government for "false trespass, false imprisonment, assault and battery, torture and inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment"; other awards in 1974 were Gerry McKerr £10,000, Michael Donnelly £11,250, James Auld £16,000 and Joseph Clarke £12,500. There have been no proceedings either inside or outside the British Army against any of the individuals involved in this process.

References:

1. "Report of the European Commission of Human Rights" (Application Number 5310/71; Ireland against the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland).  
Strasbourg 1976.
2. "Report of the Enquiry into Allegations against the Security Forces of Physical Brutality in Northern Ireland arising out of the events on the 9th August 1971".  
Chairman, Sir Edmund Compton.  
H.M.S.O. London, Cmnd 4823, November 1971.
3. "Report of the Committee of Privy Councillors Appointed to consider Authorised Procedures for the Interrogation of Persons Suspected of Terrorism". (Majority Report by Lord Parker and Mr. John Boyd Carpenter; Minority Report by Lord Gardiner).  
Chairman, Lord Parker of Waddington.  
H.M.S.O. London, Cmnd 4901, January 1972.
4. "The Guinea Pigs" by McGuffin, John.  
Penguin, Harmondsworth 1974.