

ow
From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



~~Question 7-10~~

DB

HOME OFFICE
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE
LONDON SW1H 9AT

4 February 1985

nbp
omb
4/2

Dear David,

REGIMES IN DETENTION CENTRES

I thought you might find it helpful to know that, following on from the Home Secretary's announcement on 24 July 1984 of a programme of work for detention centre regimes (copy enclosed) he is now ready to announce the implementation (within existing resources) of the new, consistent regime for the whole detention centre system. He proposes to do this by way of an arranged PQ, and he has asked me to send you the enclosed text and to say that he plans to answer the Question on 13 February.

Copies of this letter and enclosures go to the Private Secretaries to the Lord Chancellor, the Lord President of the Council, the Secretaries of State for Northern Ireland, Scotland and the Social Services, the Lord Privy Seal, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, the Chief Whip and Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours ever,
Christine.

MRS C J HEALD

David Barclay, Esq

E.B.

DETENTION CENTRE REGIMES: ARRANGED PQ FOR WRITTEN ANSWER ON 13 FEBRUARY

DRAFT QUESTION

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when the new regime for detention centres envisaged in his Written Answer of 24 July 1984 will come into operation.

DRAFT REPLY

On 6 March. The new regime will follow the lines I outlined on 24 July 1984. Copies of a note summarising its main features have been placed in the Library and the Vote Office.

TOUGHER REGIMES: ARRANGED PQ FOR WRITTEN ANSWER ON TUESDAY 24 JULY

DRAFT QUESTION

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when he will publish the evaluation of the experiment with tougher regimes in detention centres; and if he will make a statement.

DRAFT REPLY

The report of this evaluation, which has been carried out by the Young Offender Psychology Unit of the Prison Department and overseen by a committee with two independent members, is being published today, and copies have been placed in the Library and the Vote Office.

I am now putting in hand a programme of work to establish a consistent regime for the whole detention centre system - including those establishments which have been operating the experimental regime - with a view to enhancing the role of detention centres as a distinctive feature of the penal system commanding the confidence of the courts. The experiment will now be concluded. Of the features particularly associated with the tougher regimes experiment the new regime for all DCs will include increased emphasis on parades and inspections; demanding work; earlier lights out; an initial period of restricted association, privileges and outside activities; and a brisker tempo. On the other hand, formal drill sessions and extra physical education will not be continued: many trainees came to find them undemanding and their inclusion would leave less time for other features - notably hard work - which the new regime will emphasise.

This programme will take full account of the evaluation findings, experience of running the tougher regimes, informed comment (including the memorandum which the Prison Officers' Association sent to us in 1982), and the way in which detention centres generally have geared their regimes to the new sentencing structure which was introduced last May. The experimental regime has made an important contribution to my decision on what form of regime should now be standard practice in detention centres. The evaluation report finds that the experimental regime had no statistically significant effect on the rate at which trainees were reconvicted: while it was right to test whether any such effect would be produced this conclusion is not surprising against the

general background of research findings on the indentifiable deterrent effects of particular sentences. Nor does it alter in any way the need to establish a positive and well-defined detention centre regime. The evaluation rightly goes much wider: its particular value lies in the practical information it presents about the operation of the experimental regimes, their impact on both trainees and staff, and the suitability of different regime elements.

The report's confirmation of the impact on inmates of the first few days of sentence is especially important. We shall build on this finding - and on the changes made by detention centres in May 1983 to accommodate the new two week minimum effective sentence - to make a brisk and structured initial two week programme a key feature of the new regime. This will highlight basic and unpopular work such as scrubbing floors; increased emphasis on parades and inspections; and minimal privileges and association. As in the experimental regimes, trainees will now have to move briskly from activity to activity, and their lives will be conducted at a brisk tempo and within a well-defined framework.

For the subsequent part of sentence the operation of the grade system will be sharpened so that incentives such as eligibility for association, privileges, the less unpopular types of work and any outside activities will be clearly dependent on good conduct.

Trainees will have physical education for an average of one hour each weekday. The content of education classes will be in keeping with the regime, and trainees of compulsory school age will participate in education, including physical education, for at least 20 hours a week. The interest taken by staff in the progress and well-being of trainees was a central feature of the tougher regimes experiment and this, together with the firm but fair approach towards trainees which has long been followed by detention centre staff, and whose value the report has re-inforced, will be maintained.

The Prison Department will work with the governors of detention centres and their staff on the detail of the regime adjustments which will be required. The prison service unions will be fully consulted at both local and national level. By early next year the new regime will be in general operation in all detention centres, including those which have taken part in the experiment. It will be monitored by the Prison Department. At the same time the analysis of certain reconviction and related data outstanding from the evaluation of the tougher regimes experiment will be completed.

The new detention centre regime will be a marked improvement over the regime which was in operation before the tougher regimes experiment was introduced in 1980. In incorporating much of the experimental regime on a permanent basis it will provide a penalty to which the courts can turn with confidence when dealing with an offender for whom a short period in custody is necessary.

REGIMES IN DETENTION CENTRES

Introduction

1. On 24 July 1984 the Home Secretary announced the publication of a report by the Prison Department Young Offender Psychology Unit evaluating the experiment with tougher regimes in certain detention centres, and a programme of work to conclude the tougher regimes experiment and establish a consistent regime for the whole detention centre system. The new regime will come into operation on 6 March 1985. This note outlines the new regime, with particular reference to those areas which have been under review.

2. The aims of a detention centre, as defined in the Detention Centre Rules 1983, are

"to provide a disciplined daily routine; to provide work, education and other activities of a kind that will assist offenders to acquire or develop personal resources and aptitudes; to encourage offenders to accept responsibility; and to help them with their return to the community in co-operation with the services responsible for supervision."

Work includes concrete moulding, market gardening, commercial greenhouse production, kitchen labour, cleaning, building maintenance and care of grounds and gardens. For those of compulsory school age there is at least 15 hours' education per week: and remedial, maintenance, social and personal education is provided for other inmates. There is an average of one hour's physical education each day.

3. The aim of the programme announced by the Home Secretary has been to ensure that detention centres, operating within the Detention Centre Rules 1983, provide a well defined, structured, purposive and balanced regime appropriate for offenders for whom the courts have concluded that there is no alternative to a short period in custody.

Structure of regime(i) Initial two week programme

4. As envisaged in the Home Secretary's announcement, a key feature of the regime will be a brisk and structured initial two week programme. This will build on the confirmation in the evaluation of the tougher regimes experiment of the importance of the impact on inmates of the first few days of sentence,

and also on the incorporation into their regimes by all detention centres in May 1983 of an initial two week programme. The initial two week programme will provide a complete short purposive regime for those serving the shortest sentences and at the same time a structured introduction to the sentence for those serving longer terms. It will include the following particular features:-

- a) The work carried out by inmates in the first two weeks will be basic and demanding. Examples of such work are cleaning and servicing the centre. Inmates will not normally be eligible during this period for training courses.
- b) There will be greater emphasis on parades and inspections. Weight will be given to their importance in promoting the high standards of cleanliness, tidiness, discipline and personal effort expected of inmates, and in introducing them to such standards in a systematic way at the beginning of sentence. Standard setting generally will be a key part of the initial two week programme.
- c) Association and privileges will be minimal. Their scope may be marginally widened in the second week to provide incentives for short-termers.
- d) Where local circumstances permit this to be done from within existing resources, rising time or lights out or both will be earlier than for inmates who have completed their first two weeks.
- e) The tempo for inmates in the first two weeks will be particularly brisk.
- f) Staff will continue to pay particular attention to the needs of inmates during this period. They are aware that the early days of sentence can be a traumatic time for inmates, and that it is important to identify and take account of inmates' needs, abilities and problems as swiftly as possible after reception. As before, reception and induction procedures will be conscientiously and professionally carried out, and staff will take an interest in the well-being and progress of inmates and adopt a firm but fair approach.

- g) As before, every newly received inmate will have a thorough initial medical examination, and this will normally take place within 24 hours of arrival. Reception medical examinations will take full account of the demands of the regime. The possibility of transferring an unfit inmate from an establishment operating the experimental regime to one which is not will no longer be applicable. But it will continue to be possible to restrict or adapt regime activities in accordance with the Medical Officer's guidance in the case of an inmate who is or becomes unfit for the normal regime; and, where necessary, to arrange for an inmate to be placed in a hospital within or outside the penal system for investigation, observation or treatment.

Structure of regime

(ii) The sentence as a whole

5. Looking at the sentence as a whole, for the areas which have been under review the new regime will operate as follows:-

- a) Eligibility for increased association, increased privileges, the less basic types of work and any outside activities will as far as local circumstances permit be subject to staged increases in scope during the course of sentence; will be clearly dependent on effort and good conduct; and will be tied as closely as possible to the grade system. Governors are able to alter inmates' grades under Detention Centre Rule 8(2), and reduction in grade may be imposed for an offence against discipline.
- b) Emphasis will be placed on demanding work (with inmates in their first two weeks generally carrying out the most basic tasks.) The disruptive effects on work of numerous timetable changes in the course of the day will be avoided as far as possible. In the establishments which previously operated the tougher regimes experiment the opportunity will be taken to improve the continuity of work.
- c) The education requirements under the Detention Centre Rules will continue to be met. The curriculum will make provision for initial educational assessment and for remedial, maintenance, social and personal education in keeping with the regime.

- d) Inmates will spend an average of an hour each weekday on physical education. In addition, provision will be made for evening and weekend physical education, and for remedial physical activity for inmates who need it.
- e) Parades and inspections will be carried out throughout sentence (with greater emphasis during the initial two week programme.) There will be smart movement from activity to activity, but no separate drill sessions.
- f) The tempo of the regime will be purposeful throughout sentence (and particularly brisk during the first two weeks.)

Other areas of the regime

6. Areas which will not be changed as part of the introduction of the new regime include entitlements to letters and visits, the pay scheme, the arrangements relating to offences against discipline, and medical and spiritual care. The arrangements for throughcare (including preparation for release) introduced in conjunction with the May 1983 changes in the sentencing structure will continue unchanged, and the interest taken by staff in inmates as individuals and in their welfare will continue to be of central importance throughout sentence.

Prison Department

13 February 1985

~~Confidential~~
Prison Service