

## **BILLY WRIGHT INQUIRY**

**Day 94: 24th September 2008**

**Witness: Mr Stephen Davis (continued)**

He confirmed that at the time of the hostage incident at HMP Maghaberry, he had assumed that this was the development of another republican faction, and they were using Billy Wright's name to show that if he was entitled to move to his own wing, then these inmates should be able to do the same.

He described the activity in HMP Maze after Mr Mogg arrived as frenetic. "[Mr Mogg] started to organise meetings with the factions. He would have gone down the wings on his own... meeting the staff, ...would have been highly visible, extremely charismatic and went through an absolute mountain of work and made phenomenal changes...using his presence as his main management tool." He explained that Mr Mogg did not work to a schedule, and would often request, without notice, that he be accompanied into a wing.

He accepted that his analysis of security and control issues within HMP Maze in October 1997 was very similar to Mr Craig's analysis in February 1997. He agreed that although the key security breach that led to Billy Wright's murder was the smuggling of guns into HMP Maze, the lack of proper searching and the fences not being checked were also key security failings.

During the last three months of 1997, he had received information from various sources, including prison officers, concerning security issues in HMP Maze. Much of the information related to the possible actions of the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA). Had he received any information concerning threats to Billy Wright he would have noted them and passed them on, as he had done with this information on the PIRA. The minutes of a meeting of the Prison Liaison Group (PLG) in December 1997 stated that having received information from the Prison Information Unit, the PLG believed that the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA), Ulster Defence Association (UDA) and Loyalist Volunteer Force (LVF) had 'generally been quiet'. This had reflected his view at the time. He had not been told of the Board of Visitors' (BOV) concerns that the INLA were afraid to share a block, nor the Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NIACRO) correspondence addressing similar concerns, or the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) findings. He said if all of these concerns were exactly as they had been told to the Inquiry, then his analysis of what was going on in H Block 6 had not been fully informed.

**Witness: Mr Kenneth Crompton, a prison governor**

He joined the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) in 1972 and worked in HMP Belfast, HMP Magilligan, HMP Maze and NIPS Headquarters. He was Deputy Governor of HMP Maze from October 1997 until he became Governor of HMP Maze in 1998.

He said that when he arrived at HMP Maze in October 1997, he questioned why INLA were not housed in the same block as the PIRA, as numerically the PIRA block could have housed both. Mr Mogg had explained that this option had been attempted previously but that the PIRA would not accept it. He was not aware that Mr Mogg had later reported that the PIRA had a change of heart, space depending. He was of the opinion that one of the main reasons that the LVF and INLA were co-located was financial, HMP Maze did not have the capacity to run eight blocks at a time.

He described Mr Mogg as sometimes being too optimistic rather than realistic. For example, he had thought he would be able to develop a good relationship with the paramilitaries, so that they would respond to his efforts to do things to make their lives easier. He also had optimism that the Prison Officers Association (POA) would respond to some of his initiatives. Neither the paramilitaries nor the POA responded as favourably as he had expected. He explained that due to this 'can do' attitude, and his energy and enthusiasm, he often did not consult Mr Crompton on issues within the Deputy Governor's remit, and tried to do virtually everything within the prison himself. Mr Crompton did not feel out of the loop as he was generally responsible for looking after the routine of the prison.

Mr Crompton said that the 'No First Strike' agreement between the INLA and LVF meant that H Block 6 was no more a priority for the bacon slicer turnstiles than other blocks. The main complaint about the existing turnstiles was that the prisoners could break through and trap staff, and that could have happened in any block.

He said that both he and Mr Mogg had believed the tensions in H block 6 were reducing. The 'No First Strike' agreement had been brokered a few weeks prior to the ICRC visit. In his view, it was possible that INLA had made the comments, which had led the ICRC to describe the block as a 'powder keg', in order to up the ante and persuade the NIPS to give INLA a different block. He said that had he known about the ICRC's conclusions he would have tried to validate them.