

Telephone: Belfast 63210.
Telegrams: "Homaff." Belfast.

Any reply to this communication should
be addressed to

"THE SECRETARY"

and the following reference quoted:

P.I.4639

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS,
STORMONT.

BELFAST,

Northern Ireland.

10th April, 1953.



Sir,

I am directed by the Minister of Home Affairs for Northern Ireland to inform you that the problem of resettling in normal life youths sentenced to Borstal treatment in Northern Ireland has for some time past been giving him increasing cause for thought. It will be appreciated that in Northern Ireland there is no liability to National Service and also that unemployment in industry and commerce exists to a proportionally very much greater extent than in Great Britain.

In these circumstances the problem of placing Borstal inmates on release on licence in such a way as to ensure, so far as it is possible to ensure, that the benefit derived from the Borstal training shall not be lost is far from simple.

There is only one Borstal Institution in Northern Ireland with on an average 50 to 60 inmates. Normally the lads are detained in the Institution for approximately two years. Accordingly, the number of releases is about 25 or a little more per annum.

Of those released by no means all could in any circumstances be regarded as suitable for enlistment in the Forces, but it has been found that each year there may be perhaps up to about 15 lads who are anxious or willing to join the Forces, this number including some earlier released who subsequently discover a desire to join.

Not all of those desiring to enlist could, with confidence, be recommended but it would be reasonable to estimate that each year from eight to twelve youths become available who would be as likely to develop into good Servicemen as the average recruit enlisted through normal channels. A considerable number of ex-inmates have, in fact, over a period of years been accepted and

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have made good.


It is understood that arrangements have been made by the Services with the Prison Commission for the acceptance of selected applicants put forward in an agreed manner and I am directed to enquire whether you would be prepared to extend the same facilities to ex-inmates of the Northern Ireland Borstal Institution with such modifications of the machinery as may be appropriate to the position here.

In Northern Ireland the functions performed in Great Britain by the Prison Commission are performed by this Ministry, and on release on licence Borstal inmates are committed to the care and supervision of a small body formed in connection with the Institution which acts in the dual capacity of the Visiting Committee for the Institution and of the Borstal Association for Northern Ireland responsible for the after care of inmates released on licence. The contact between the Governor of the Institution, the Association and the Ministry is, therefore, close and it is felt that no undue difficulty should be experienced in limiting recommendations to those likely to prove satisfactory.

I am to request that the matter may receive consideration and that an expression of your views may be conveyed for the information of the Minister, at your early convenience.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

Capt. G.C. Blundell,
O.B.E.,
Director of Naval Recruiting,
Queen Anne's Mansions,
St. James Park,
LONDON, S.W.1.


for Secretary.