

A STATE APART

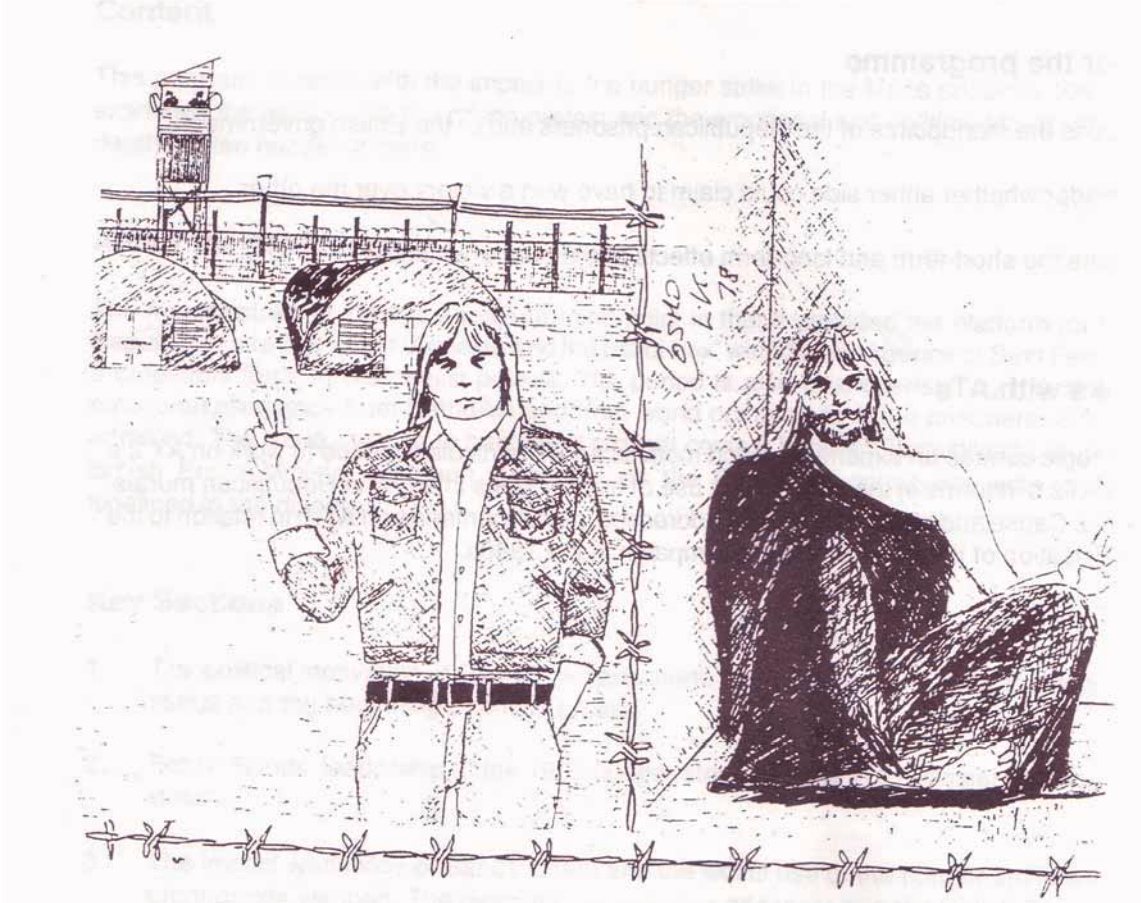
Task Sheet 1

Programme 4

HUNGER STRIKE

CHANGES IN THE PRISON SYSTEM

Source A



- 1a. Describe what is shown in the sketch.
- 1b. List the differences in prison conditions you can find in the sketch.
2. Do you think the artist was trying to gain support for a point of view?
3. Is the sketch a PRIMARY or a SECONDARY source?
4. Do you consider this source to be propaganda? Give your reasons.
5. Describe the changes in prison policy introduced in Northern Ireland after the hunger strike.

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Task Sheet 2

Programme 4

HUNGER STRIKE

PERSPECTIVES

“There is no such thing as political bombing or political violence. We will not compromise on this. There will be no political status. Crime is crime is crime. It is not political. It is crime and there can be no question of granting political status.”

Margaret Thatcher, March 1981

“There were people on the marches against the Government’s treatment of the hunger strikers who had never been on a march before. Never was there such a determination among the mass of people to have done with the British Government.”

Des Wilson, a Catholic Priest speaking in October 1981

“We were led to believe that only a minority of Catholics supported violence. To Protestants, the hunger strike showed that Catholics were prepared to support the gunmen who murdered their fellow citizens.”

Frank Millar, Official Unionist speaking in May 1983

“It’s nice to be tough but it would be better to be tough about issues other than this. There are special courts and special laws, so why can’t there be special prisoners?”

Andy Tyrie, a UDA Leader, Fortnight Magazine, July 1981

“I think the issues of the hunger strike were very simple and clear.... Who was going to govern the country? Was it going to be the elected Government or were the IRA going to be able – by blackmail and by a hunger strike – to make the British Government surrender?”

Ian Paisley, Timewatch, October 1993

“Is there such a thing as a political prisoner? If you go out and you shoot someone or you blow them up, it’s murder and I don’t see anything political about murder.”

Mrs Marlene Wilson, an RUC widow, Timewatch, October 1993

1. Using the list of quotations offered in **Task Sheet 2**, try to work out how the following groups of people might have felt about the hunger strike of 1981:
 - Catholics who did not support the IRA
 - Protestants living in Northern Ireland
 - Margaret Thatcher, the British Prime Minister
 - Loyalist paramilitaries
2. Why is the hunger strike seen as a turning point for Nationalist voters in Northern Ireland?
3. Explain why the hunger strike further divided Catholics and Protestants during the 1980s.

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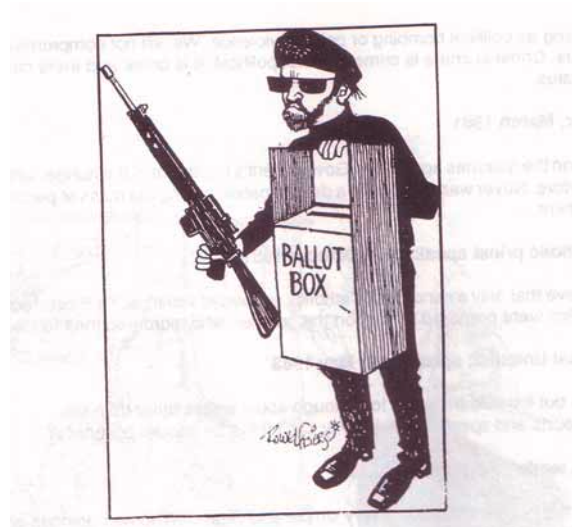
Task Sheet 3

Programme 4

HUNGER STRIKE

INTERPRETING THE PAST

Source A



Source B



Both pictures attempt to make a political point about Sinn Fein. SOURCE A dates from 1982 and SOURCE B was painted sometime after the hunger strike on the gable wall of the Sinn Fein Office in Belfast.

1. Describe what is shown in each of the pictures.
2. What point is the artist in SOURCE A making about Sinn Fein?
3. What point is the wall mural trying to make about Sinn Fein?
4. Give reasons for the different messages put across by these pictures.
5. In what way has the wall mural used the history of the hunger strike to gain support for Sinn Fein?