

PRISON ESCAPES 5



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Redoine Faïd escapes: It wasn't the first time that Faïd, an armed robber being held in the death of a police officer, had gone on the lam. Here are a few other notorious prison escapes.



A special police officer stands guard in front the jail of Sequedin near Lille, northern France, April 14. Redoine Faïd, an inmate, used explosives and took hostages to escape out of jail on Saturday morning, local media reported.

PARIS

Redoine Faïd's escape from a French prison landed him on Interpol's most wanted list Monday, two days after he took four guards hostage and used explosives hidden inside tissue packets to blast his way out of a prison in Lille. Faïd freed his hostages along his getaway route.

It wasn't the first time that Faïd, an armed robber being held in the death of a police officer, had gone on the lam. He was arrested in 1998 after three years on the run in Switzerland and Israel, according to the French media. Faïd was freed after serving 10 years of his 31-year sentence, then swore he had turned his life around, writing a confessional book about his life of crime and going on an extensive media tour.

"When I was on the run, I lived all the time with death, with fear of the police, fear of getting shot," he told Europe 1 radio at the time.

Here's a look at other notorious prison escapes:

HIGH-RISE CRIME

Two bank robbers, onetime cellmates at a downtown Chicago lockup, used a rope made from bed sheets tied together to drop 20 stories to freedom in December 2012. Authorities say they apparently broke a cell window, pulled out the bars then descended to freedom from the downtown Metropolitan Correctional Center. Hours later, the rope of sheets — at least 200 feet (61 meters) long and knotted every 6 feet (2 meters) — was still dangling down the side of the building. Both men were recaptured within weeks.

DIRTY LAUNDRY

Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman spent months corrupting his guards at a Mexican prison, then tricked them into thinking they would get a cut of some gold being smuggled out of the prison the night of Jan. 19, 2001. Instead, he smuggled himself out on a laundry cart with the help of a maintenance worker on his payroll. Security camera footage from that night disappeared and computer records of the vehicles entering and leaving the prison were erased. Guzman has since risen to the top of the Sinaloa cartel, Mexico's most powerful international drug trafficking network, and has been in hiding ever since. He is considered to be among the world's richest men.

ESCAPE FROM SAN QUENTIN

In 1979, bank robber Forrest Silva Tucker and two other San Quentin inmates built a kayak out of plastic sheets, wood, duct tape and Formica. The vessel held together just long enough for the three to paddle a few hundred yards to freedom. A few years later, police said, Tucker joined the Over-the-Hill-Gang — a group of elderly thieves who robbed Boston-area supermarkets. Tucker was visiting a girlfriend in Florida in 1999 when he was caught again.

KNITTING NEEDLES

George Blake, a British double agent, used a ladder made of rope and knitting needles to escape Wormwood Scrubs jail in 1966, five years into his 42-year sentence for treason. With the help of accomplices, he made his way to the border of East Germany hidden in a secret compartment inside a camper van. Blake ended up in the Soviet Union and still lives in Russia, where he receives a KGB pension and last year celebrated his 90th birthday.

THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY

Ronnie Biggs was part of a gang that stole sacks containing 2.6 million pounds sterling from a Glasgow-to-London mail train in August 1963. The haul from what was dubbed the Great Train Robbery would be worth more than 40 million pounds (\$60 million) today. Biggs escaped from prison in 1965 by scaling a 30-foot wall with three other inmates. Styling himself "the last of the gentleman crooks," Biggs charged \$50 — later hiked to \$60 — for visitors to join a barbecue at his home where they could also buy the T-shirt: "I went to Rio and met Ronnie Biggs ... honest." He spent decades thumbing his nose at British authorities from his home in Brazil before returning to Britain aboard a plane chartered by a tabloid newspaper. Biggs was freed from prison in 2009 on compassionate grounds after a series of strokes.

1966: The Blake prison escape



A short history of the miraculous prison break of Soviet double-agent George Blake from a British jail, organised by two libertarian activists.

In 1966, the most notorious prisoner in Britain was sprung from jail. George Blake was a British double-agent serving 42 years for spying for the Soviet Union. At the time this was the longest jail sentence ever imposed by a British court.

For 22 years the truth of his escape remained a secret. Common wisdom held that it must have been a professional operation masterminded by the KGB, the IRA or even the British security services. However in 1988, two radical peace activists revealed that they had rescued Blake from prison and smuggled him out of the country to Eastern Europe.

Michael Randle and Pat Pottle were founder members of the Committee of 100 anti-nuclear direct action group and describe themselves as libertarians and “quasi-anarchists”. In 1962, at the height of the Cold War, they had both been sentenced to 18 months imprisonment for conspiracy to organise the Committee of 100 demonstrations at the nuclear base USAF Wethersfield in Essex. They both had first hand experience of prison and it was their outrage at the “vicious” sentence imposed on Blake that led them to attempt to free him. They believed the sentence was “unjust” and that “helping him was a decent human response.”

Being ex-cons in the same prison Blake was in not only enabled them to empathise with Blake, but also gave them contacts on the inside who could help with the escape. It also meant they had some knowledge of the layout of the prison and the level of security.

They had experience of covert planning from their time in the peace movement in the early 60s, a movement which managed to pull off impressive actions like the Spies for Peace campaign in 1963, when peace activists invaded a secret underground bunker intended for members of the government in time of nuclear war. The “Spies” stole documents from the shelter and sent them to all major national newspapers, revealing for the first time the existence of a national network of these ‘Regional Seats of Government’ and the government plans for an all-out nuclear war.

Randle and Pottle used their experience of direct action in planning the Blake escape. Pat Pottle said, “I was determined that if I was to get involved with the break it should not fail because of silly or obvious mistakes... If we were to be caught it should not be the result of inadequate planning.”

While in prison for the Wethersfield actions, they had met Blake and also Sean Bourke (serving 7 years for sending a bomb to a senior policeman), who plotted the escape with them. After their release they kept in touch with the two longer term prisoners and when Sean was staying in a half-way house, preparing for release from prison, he made contact with Randle and Pottle. He told them that Blake had appealed to him to help him escape, rather than spend the rest of his life in prison.

When the idea of escape was originally raised, Blake suggested that they contact the Russian Embassy for help. But from the beginning Randle and Pottle ruled out any idea of dealing with the murderous Soviet Union. It was their liking for Blake personally and sympathy for his 42-year "death sentence" which motivated them. As Michael Randle said: "It was to be an entirely unprofessional – almost one could say DIY – affair."

Sean Bourke worked out a plan with Blake, exchanging notes via another inmate whose prison job took him between the pre-release hostel where Bourke was, and the long-termers' D-wing where Blake was kept. Bourke set up a small network of helpers to smuggle things into the prison and bought walkie-talkies so they could keep in contact even when he was released from prison. He smuggled one of these in to Blake, choosing a type which could not be picked up by the police radios.

Their plan was as follows: D-block, where Blake was housed, was the block nearest to one wall of the prison. The prison blocks have large gothic windows at each end made up of a number of smaller panes of glass, divided by cast iron struts. Blake was to make his exit from the prison landing through one of these windows. Removing two of the panes of glass and one of the struts would make a hole eighteen inches by twelve – just big enough to squeeze through. Blake had made himself a wooden frame of exactly these dimensions, which he kept in his cell to practice squeezing through. From the window, Blake would be able to drop down into the yard.

The panes of glass were removed from the window a couple of days before the day of the escape and the iron cross-bar was broken and then stuck back in place with tape, so that it could be quickly removed when the time came.

They planned to make the escape attempt between 6 and 7pm on a Saturday evening when most of the inmates and staff would be at the weekly prison film show. The only two screws on duty were normally watching television in a room without a clear line of sight to the window Blake would be exiting from.

Bourke would park a getaway car nearby and throw a specially designed rope ladder (the rungs were made of size 13 knitting needle – sufficiently light to be thrown but still strong enough to hold Blake's weight) over the wall at a prearranged point. There were security patrols that went round the perimeter walls, but Bourke had timed them and reckoned there was enough of a gap for the escape between each circuit they made.

There was a watchman posted in the prison yard who would be able to see the escape, but they figured that if they moved quick enough, Blake could be over the wall before the watchman had a chance to raise the alarm. And even when he this did happen, they would have a few minutes head-start on any pursuing prison officers.

To work out how long it would take a search party to get round the side of the prison to the point where Blake would be dropping over the wall, Bourke took to jogging around the perimeter of

the prison every morning, claiming he wanted to get fit before release, and timing his run with a stop-watch.

Bourke also made some dummy runs in the getaway car to work out timings. On the day of the escape he just had to drive a short distance to the near-by flat they had rented under a false name which was to serve as a safe house. He was eventually released from prison and moved into the safe house just round the corner from the prison. Michael Randle raised money from friends, changed it in banks a couple of times to prevent it being traced and then gave it to Bourke to buy a getaway car (for £65!).

The day before the escape they went over all the plans, then burnt their maps and notes (and of course the sheets of paper underneath their notes, to remove the possibility of impressions being traced on underlying pages).

On the night, the escape went more or less to plan apart from Blake breaking his wrist in the 20-foot drop down the other side of the prison wall – a danger that they had failed to consider in the planning.

The ready co-operation of lots of ‘normal’ people in the escape attempt was a key factor in its success. There were many outraged at Blake’s clearly politically-motivated sentence who were willing to help in small ways. For example, Randle and Pottle managed to find a sympathetic doctor who treated Blake’s broken wrist – no questions asked.

Wild speculation began almost immediately after the successful escape – with the newspapers reporting that Blake was already out of the country and safely in Eastern Europe or that he had been spotted on a plane landing in Sydney.

Blake had lots of supporters in prison who sympathized with his predicament and were joyous at his escape. The police met with a “wall of silence” when they tried to get any information from Blake’s fellow prisoners. One lag described the atmosphere in Wormwood Scrubs the morning after the escape as being “like Christmas Day after Father Christmas has been.”

The original plan for getting Blake out of the country was to disguise him by turning him black. While hiding out in the safe house, Blake was instructed to take a medicine called meladinin, designed for the treatment of vitiligo, a disease which causes white spots to appear on the skin. By taking extra large doses, and spending time under a sun lamp, Blake would be able to pass as an Arab, helped by his knowledge of Arabic, which he had studied in prison.

Randle and Pottle forged a prescription to get large doses of meladinin, destroying the equipment used to forge the prescription afterwards, and going in disguise to the pharmacy to buy it. However, Blake never actually took the meladinin because he was worried about the side effects – large doses can cause liver damage.

It all started to go wrong when the boisterously over-confident Sean Bourke became increasingly sketchy. He had talked about getting forged passports from ‘underworld contacts’ but it later turned out he had no idea how to go about doing this. The meladinin idea and the false passports were finally abandoned and they settled for smuggling Blake out of the country instead.

It started to go from bad to worse. Sean Bourke had originally bought a getaway car in his own name. When this was discovered he was ordered to sell the car and buy another one under a false name.

But after Blake had been broken out and was holed up in the flat they had rented, it turned out that Bourke had lied to Randle and Pottle and actually used the original car which was registered to him in the escape. This was soon found by the police and identified as the car used in the getaway.

The 'safe' house Bourke had rented for Blake to stay in turned out to be a bedsit with shared facilities and a landlady who came in to clean once a week – not suitable at all for an escaped convict.

It later turned out that unbeknownst to Randle and Pottle, Bourke had purposefully endangered the whole project by sending photos of himself to the newspapers, phoning the police and telling them the whereabouts of the getaway car, and sending a death threat to the cop he had originally sent prison for sending a bomb to.

It appears that many of Bourke's bizarre actions and his blasé attitude to security were driven by a desire for notoriety – a desire to make a name for himself and then be able to make some sort of career out of this. This was indeed what he did in a small way by publishing a book about the escape in 1970 that practically named all the other participants in the escape.

Due to the discovery of the car and the situation with the flat, Blake was moved through a series of 'safe' houses around London, mostly staying with friends of Randle and Pottle's. This proved to be almost as dodgy as staying in Sean Bourke's bedsit. The wife of one friend who agreed to temporarily shelter Blake told her analyst all about it – because of course the analyst "requires her to be completely frank and not to conceal anything from him". Needless to say Blake was swiftly found somewhere else to stay.

The police were looking for Sean Bourke because of finding the getaway car, so it was decided that he should also travel to the USSR to meet up with Blake and stay there until he was able to safely return home to Ireland.

It was finally decided to smuggle Blake out in a camper van. Randle and Pottle got a friend with some knowledge of woodwork to build a compartment into the camper van. Michael Randle took his family to East Berlin in the camper van – with Blake hidden underneath. The wholesome family and the children in the back of the van, cheerfully sitting on top of the most wanted man in Britain, easily fooled the few cops and customs officers who happened to look in the back of the van. They never told the children they were sitting on top of an escaped spy, and managed to keep the whole thing from them.

George Blake was thus successfully delivered to East Berlin in December 1966, the conclusion to one of the most successful and most notorious prison escapes ever.

Taken from Do or Die! #10

Arsonist Arrested After Prison Escape Act

3:40pm UK, Tuesday 31 March 2009



Julien Chautard escaped from Pentonville prison last week.

Police have arrested a convicted arsonist who escaped from Pentonville prison by clinging to the underside of a security van.

Julien Chautard, 39, was arrested in the Piccadilly area of central London shortly before 9am this morning.

A **Scotland Yard** spokesman said his friends and family encouraged him to call police.

Chautard made a phone call to Islington CID and told Detective Inspector Yasmin Lalani that he would be in Piccadilly this morning.

Det Insp Lalani thanked Chautard's family, members of the public and the media, saying "without their help this positive result might not have been possible".

Chautard was sentenced to seven years in jail at Snaresbrook Crown Court last week for arson and endangering life in an incident in Hackney.

But the convict spent just minutes inside **Pentonville prison** in north London before he slipped out underneath the van he had arrived in.

It is believed Chautard may have crawled underneath the van and clung on as it was driven back through the prison gates.

Prison officials have launched an official enquiry into how staff failed to notice the inmate's escape.

Manhunt on for dangerous arsonist after daring escape from Pentonville Prison

Blundering prison officers are facing the sack after a dangerous arsonist escaped by slipping under a security van.

Blundering prison officers are facing the sack after a dangerous arsonist escaped by slipping under a security van.

Julien Chautard (below), 39, broke out of jail almost as soon as he had arrived after being sentenced at court to seven years behind bars. But never even made it to his cell.



julien chautard

He was counted off the van which brought him from court – but tricked officers by simply hiding behind the vehicle.

Incredibly, they failed to spot an inmate was missing and gave the driver permission to go back into the “air lock” which leads out of the jail.

Chautard had by then got under the van – and escaped by hanging from its underside.

His getaway method on Friday remained a mystery for seven hours as Pentonville Prison in North London was scoured by officers ordered to stay until 2am on Saturday.

Only then was it noticed on CCTV footage that a shadow under the van had not been there as it entered the jail.

One Pentonville source said: “There’s been hell to pay. The governor got all the staff in the chapel and told them ‘Someone will get the sack for this’.

“We were told police units and even helicopter crews were out searching because the guy had burned a house down and is seen as a serious threat.

“He saw his chance when he got out of the van and slipped underneath and away.”

Scotland Yard said Chautard was sentenced at Snaresbrook court, East London, for “arson being reckless as to whether life was endangered”.

A spokesman added: “He is white, 5ft 7in, slim, with fair hair and blue eyes, and he has connections in France and to the Hackney, Edgware and King’s Cross areas of London.”

Nazis, spoons and Johnny Depp: The top 10 most daring jailbreaks

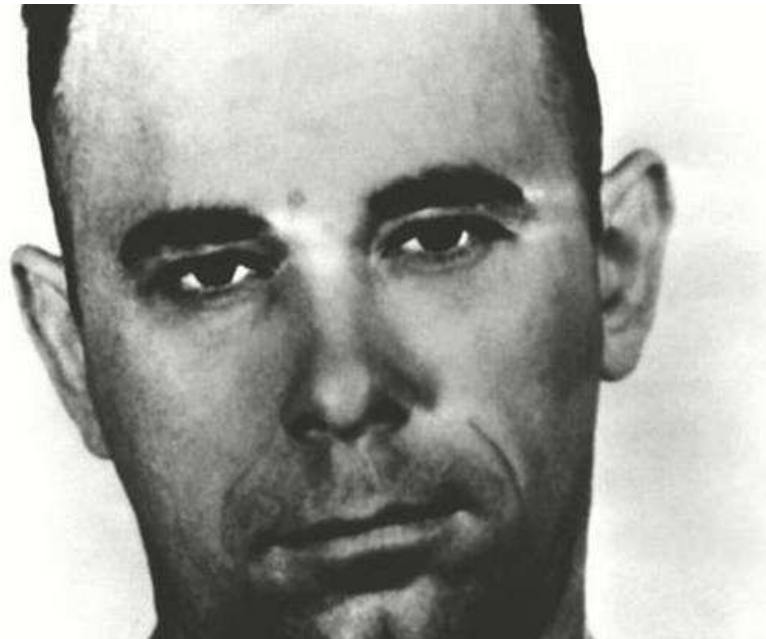
With news today of arsonist Julien Chautard’s escape from Pentonville prison, we take a look at the top ten most daring jailbreaks.

With news today of arsonist Julien Chautard’s escape from Pentonville prison, we take a look at the top ten most daring jailbreaks.

1. There was embarrassment for the Greek government earlier this month after two of the country’s most notorious criminals managed to escape a maximum security prison via helicopter.

Four prison guards and a helicopter pilot have since been arrested. Watch footage below.

2. Set to be immortalised in a Hollywood film with Johnny Depp in the leading role later this year, John Dillinger's 1933 escape from Lima jail in Ohio remains one of the most infamous.



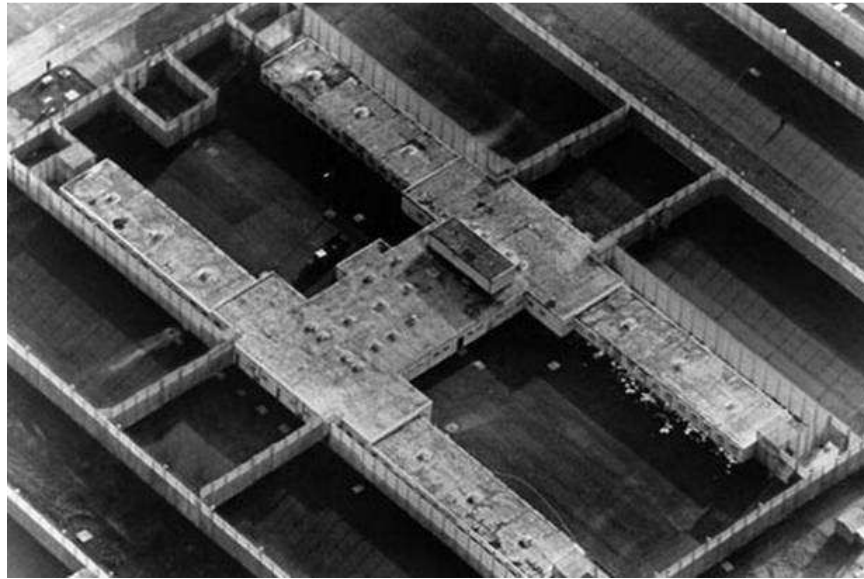
John Dillinger (Pic:Rex)

Prison wardens had found what appeared to be a jailbreak plan in the notorious US bank robber's pocket.

Despite denying he was about to attempt an escape, he was kept under surveillance by guards.

Four days later, a group of fellow inmates escaped using the very same method laid out in the discovered notes. The escapees later returned, shot the sheriff and freed Dillinger.

3. The biggest jailbreak in British penal history took place in 1983, when 38 prisoners escaped from the maximum security Maze prison in County Antrim, Northern Ireland.



Maze Prison (Pic:PA)

Once considered one of the most escape-proof jails in Europe, one Maze officer died of a heart attack as a result of the escape and 20 others were injured, including two who were shot with guns that had been smuggled into the prison.

Half of the escapees were recaptured within two days. However 19 managed to make it to the Republic of Ireland with four getting as far as the United States. One prisoner has never been seen or heard of since.

4. In 1996, resourceful Brit David McMillan managed to escape from Thailand's hard-line Klong Prem Central Prison while awaiting trial on drug charges.

With the threat of the death penalty hanging over him, McMillan cut the bars of his shared cell with a hacksaw then negotiated four walls before scaling the prison's electrified outer perimeter using a bamboo ladder.

Within four hours he had managed to board a flight to Singapore with a fake passport.

5. Alfréd Wetzler and Rudolf Vrba were two of only a few prisoners known to have escaped from the Auschwitz death camp during the Holocaust.

The pair, both Slovak Jews made good their escape after hiding in a wood stack for four days.

Prior to the getaway, Wetzler mapped out a detailed plan of the camp, which included construction details of the gas chambers, crematoriums and, most significantly, details of the Zyklon used in the Auschwitz's deadly gas chambers.

Wetzler's notes were later used to compile a report, revealing for the first time to the outside world the truth about the camp as a place of mass murder.

6.After spending just two years as a British WW2 Prisoner of War in Germany's Colditz Castle, Pat Reid dashed through the prison's kitchens, through the yards and crawled across a dry moat. It took him four days to reach Switzerland with a fellow escapee.



Colditz Castle (Pic:PA)

Pat defied the Nazi's, who believed Colditz was impossible to escape from.

Capitalising on his triumph he wrote two books, *The Colditz Story* and *The Latter Days at Colditz*. The former book was made into a BBC mini-series starring Robert Wagner.

To make the task easier for future prisoners, Pat joined up with Parker Brothers and developed a board game relating to his time as POW. One player gets stuck with a German flag while the rest pick the part of an American, British, Dutch, French or Polish prisoner.

7.After countless failed attempts by scores of less fortunate prisoners, three lags successfully broke out of California's Alcatraz in San Francisco Bay for the first time in 1962 with the help of little more than a few spoons and a homemade raft.



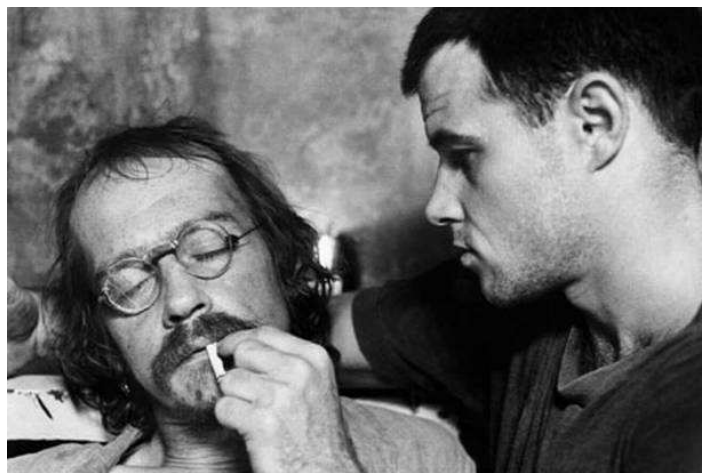
Alcatraz

Frank Lee and Brothers Clarence and John Anglin placed dummy heads made of soap, toilet paper and real hair in their beds to fool prison officers checking in at night.

Meanwhile, they made their break for freedom Shawshank Redemption-style and cut through the back of their cells with sharpened cutlery, before shimmying through a ventilation duct and down a pipe.

The raft which took them off the island was made of no more than a few pieces of driftwood and raincoats sewn together.

8.In 1970 Billy Hayes, an American student studying in Turkey, was caught trying to smuggle hashish out of the country.



Midnight Express (Pic:Rex)

He landed himself a life sentence but escaped in 1975 to Greece before making it back to the States.

His experiences formed the best-selling book *Midnight Express*, which eventually became a movie starring Brad Davis (above).

The film courted criticism, however, over a number of plot exaggerations, the biggest of which being the details of Hayes' jailbreak.

The film sees him make a violent escape in which he unwittingly kills a prison warden. In reality Hayes made a far less dramatic exit via the sea surrounding the jail.

9.In 1984, the largest ever mass death row escape in American history took place at Mecklenburg Correctional Center in Virginia.

The six inmates had taken note of how lax prison guards were about following procedures and duly took advantage.

Hiding in a guards office while on his way back from recreation, one of the lags overpowered the correctional officer then used his keys to release all of the locks in the housing unit.

Inmates took over the unit and stole the uniforms of other guards.

They then bluffed their way out of the unit by donning riot helmets that hid their faces while carrying a purported bomb (in actuality a prison TV covered with a blanket) out to a waiting van, which they then drove out of the prison.

All six were recaptured within 18 days, and were eventually executed as planned.

10.Stalag Luft III was a German Air Force prisoner-of-war camp during World War II that housed captured air force servicemen.



Steve McQueen

On the night of 24th of March, 1944, over 200 captured Allied aircrew attempted a mass break out.

The attempt was the culmination of many months of careful preparation, including the digging of a narrow tunnel over 330 feet in length.

Of the 76 who made it out of from the prison camp, only three made it home, with 50 executed by the Gestapo.

The story inspired Christmas TV movie staple *The Great Escape*. Like *Midnight Express*, more than a few liberties were taken by the film's makers.

For example, Steve McQueen's iconic motorcycle dash for the border was entirely fictional, due to the fact that no serving members of the American armed forces were involved in the final escape.

Great prison escapes

When a prisoner last week slipped out of Pentonville clinging to the underside of a van, he took his place in a daring tradition of escapes involving dynamite, helicopters and nail clippers



Convicted arsonist Julien Chautard handed himself into police after escaping from Pentonville prison. Photograph: Metropolitan Police/PA

French-born arsonist Julien Chautard handed himself into police yesterday after an audacious escape in which he succeeded in slipping away from a group of new arrivals at Pentonville prison in north London. As the other prisoners were being marched inside, Chautard managed to duck behind the prison van that had just brought them there there from Snaresbrook crown court (where Chautard, 39, had been sent down for seven years). He then succeeded in leaving the jail a few minutes later clinging to the underside of the same van. Pretty smart, Julien. But how does this daring breakout rank against some of history's best and boldest?

John Gerard, London, 1597

Gerard, a Jesuit priest, made a particularly inspired escape from the Tower of London. After first writing to Catholic sympathisers, and inserting secret clues in each letter hidden by an invisible ink of his own devising, the priest hacked his way through the stones around his cell door, finessed his way past the guards in the corridor outside, and reached a high wall overlooking the Tower's moat. Far below, a rowing boat waited in the darkness. The oarsman tossed Gerard a rope, which he knotted round a handy cannon and, on hearing the signal that the other end had been safely tied off on the other side of the moat, shimmied down to safety. He was never recaptured.

Casanova, Venice, 1755

As persistent and meticulous in engineering his jailbreaks as he was in seducing other men's wives, the convicted adulterer found himself in 1755 behind bars in The Leads, so named for the impenetrable lead that covered its walls and roof. To cut a long story short, Casanova fashioned a digging implement out of an iron rod and spent months working on a tunnel in the corner of his cell. When he was moved to another cell, he feared he would be watched so asked a monk next door to do his digging for him. The pair made good their escape by using the same trusty iron tool to batter down the doors in their path.

Colonel Thomas E Rose, Virginia, 1864

Rose, one of 1,200 Union officers banged up in a former grocer's warehouse in Richmond, - Virginia, during the American civil war, dug his way to freedom with a few colleagues using pocket knives and pieces of scrap wood. Their 50ft tunnel started in the store's cellar and ended in an empty shed. Rose was so chuffed with his construction that he returned to the jail a few days later and led another 15 men to freedom. In all, 93 Union officers used the route, prompting even the Confederate Richmond Examiner to describe the feat as "an extraordinary escapade".

Papillon, French Guiana, 1933, 1934, 1936, 1938, 1939, etc

Henri Charrière, a Paris underworld mobster, was sentenced to hard labour for life in 1931 and transported to the prison of St-Laurent-du-Maroni in French Guiana. He bust out of there in November 1933 and sailed to Colombia, where he was rearrested. He escaped again, and spent several happy and sexually active months in a native pearl divers' village before being packed off to solitary confinement on St Joseph's Island back in French Guiana. After several further attempts to escape, he ended up feigning madness on the grounds that the penal colony's mental hospital would be easier to leave than its jail. This, too, failed – but he did get to be played by Steve McQueen in a major Hollywood movie in 1973, and makes it on to this list for sheer perseverance.

Frank Morris, Clarence and John Anglin, Alcatraz, 1962

Alcatraz, built to house America's most violent criminals on an island in the San Francisco bay, was considered escape-proof. This trio proved that theory wrong. For six months they chipped away at the concrete around the ventilation shafts in their cells using nail clippers, bits of a fan and a few spoons, concealing their nightly progress by filling the holes with paste made from old newspapers. They finally wiggled through the jail's ventilation system and set off on a raft made of barrels, wire mesh and old raincoats across the water. Where, sadly, they very probably drowned.

Ronald Biggs, Wandsworth, London, 1965

The second of the £2.6m Great Train Robbers to escape from prison did so with three other inmates using a rope and a tubular ladder thrown over the wall of the prison exercise yard from a van with a platform on top parked outside. "The four prisoners immediately made for the ladder and climbed over the top," a Home Office spokesman said at the time. "Prison officers tried to stop them, but were prevented by other prisoners in the yard." The four made good their escape in three getaway cars. Biggs fled to Paris for plastic surgery and a new ID, then to Australia and finally to Brazil, where he stayed for 35 years before voluntarily returning home in 2001.

Billy Hayes, Sea of Marmara, Turkey, 1975

Sentenced to 30 years in a Turkish jail for drug smuggling in 1970, the 22-year-old American spent a brutal year in Istanbul's Sagmalicir jail before being moved to an island prison. After six months of planning, he fought a prison guard, stole his uniform, and clutching \$2,000 his father had smuggled into the prison in a photo album, rowed all night through a fierce storm to the mainland. There he dyed his blond hair black, walked halfway across Turkey and finally swam across a raging river to reach Greece. Watch the 1978 film *Midnight Express* for an (apparently highly inaccurate) idea of what it was like.

Pascal Payet, assorted French prisons, 2001, 2003, 2007

Payet, AKA Kalashnikov Pat, was serving 30 years for murder in Luynes jail when he escaped by helicopter for the first time. He was on the run for six years, during which period he organised the escape of three of his former fellow inmates, again by helicopter. Eventually recaptured and incarcerated in Grasse high security jail in the south of France, Payet flew to freedom once more in July 2007, in a Squirrel helicopter hijacked, along with its pilot, from the glamorous resort of Cannes half an hour earlier. The chopper landed on the penitentiary's roof, from where three heavily armed men set off in search of Payet. Amazingly, there have been 10 successful helicopter escapes from French jails in the past 20 years.

Antonio Ferrara, Fresnes, Paris, 2003

Ferrara, a legendary underworld explosives expert capable of blowing a safe open while leaving the cash inside unharmed, was sentenced to eight years for two armed robberies (he was suspected of 15 more). In March 2003, a couple of police cars pulled up in front of the gates of Fresnes jail outside Paris. Six men, dressed as police officers, got out. Three of them promptly opened fire on the two watchtowers with AK47s, while the others blew the front gates open with a rocket-propelled grenade launcher. Ferrara, meanwhile, calmly dynamited his cell door, jumped in one of the cars and was gone.

Prisoner escapes by clinging on to bottom of security van as it drives out of jail

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Julien Christopher Chautard escaped from Pentonville prison by hiding himself under the security van he arrived in

As the prison gates clanged shut behind him, arsonist Julien Chautard was facing seven years behind bars.

But the 39-year-old criminal, who had been sentenced just a few hours earlier, was never to see the inside of his cell at Pentonville jail.

In a scene straight out of Hollywood, he managed to slip away from his guards and hide under the prison van that had brought him from court.

Hethen found a way to cling by his fingertips to the underside of the van and stay there as it drove out of the jail - leaving prison authorities to turn Pentonville upside down in a vain search for the escapee.

Chautard had been sentenced at Snaresbrook Crown Court in East London on Friday for arson reckless as to whether life was endangered and a further charge of arson in Hackney, North London.

As the Serco prison van arrived at Pentonville in North London at 7pm on the same day prison officers failed to spot him disappear from among a group of new arrivals.

Then, emulating Robert De Niro's psychopath character Max Cady who hangs on to the underbelly of a car in the remake of the thriller Cape Fear, he is thought to have crawled under the security van and stayed there as it left the jail.

His escape went undetected for seven hours as prison officers searched the jail until 2am.

Initially, it appeared Chautard had vanished into thin air. It was only when CCTV footage was checked seven hours later that officers noticed a shadow under the van that had not been there before.



Chautard made his escape by clinging on to the underside of the van as it left the jail

The prison governor is said to have ordered all staff into the jail's chapel and warned them that someone could be fired for the blunders.

A source said: 'We were told police units and helicopter crews were out searching because the guy had burned a house down and is seen as a serious threat.'

'He saw his chance when he got out of the van and slipped underneath and away.'

Underneath the van were found his fingerprints and boot prints.

Scotland Yard is searching for French-born Chautard who has connections in France and also has links to Hackney, Edgware and King's Cross in London.



The convicted arsonist made his getaway as he was being processed at Pentonville prison

Six prisoners escaped from jails between 2007-08. The level of 'absconds' - escapes from open prisons - is much higher.

Prisoners escaping from custody in recent years include robbers Clifford Hobbs, 49, and Noel Cunningham, 48, who had accomplices shoot a guard so they could break out of a prison van on the way to Inner London Crown Court in 2003.

Hobbs was tracked down to Spain and jailed last year for a further 12 years.

Cunningham is still on the run and is one of Scotland Yard's 12 'most wanted' men.

Yard's 'most wanted man' is arrested in Amsterdam

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Arrested: Noel Cunningham is believed to have been found in Holland

One of Scotland Yard's most wanted men has been arrested

He was caught living under a false identity in the Netherlands and is believed to have been arrested in Amsterdam on Tuesday.

Noel Cunningham, 47, escaped from a prison van on June 10, 2003, while on his way to court to face charges of conspiring to steal £1.25million from a Securicor van.

He was being taken from Brixton Prison to the Inner London Crown Court when the van was ambushed by two armed men, who shot one prison guard and beat another.

Cunningham escaped with his accomplice Clifford Hobbs.

Hobbs stayed with friends in south London before fleeing on a fake passport to France, Portugal and eventually Malaga in Spain.

He was arrested and extradited to the UK in 2007.

Before their escape, Cunningham, 48, and Hobbs were due to appear in court on charges of conspiring to steal £1.25 million from a Securicor van.

Hobbs was jailed for life in February last year after he admitted organising an 'inside job' on the security van in March 2003.

Officers, who had been tipped off about the raid, moved in as the van made a pick-up from a cafe in Effra Road in Brixton, south London.



Most wanted: Cunningham escaped from a prison van with Clifford Hobbs while on his way to court to face charges over a failed security van raid

Hobbs and Cunningham were arrested at the scene in a stolen BMW and sent to Brixton Prison to await trial.

Hobbs, from Rotherhithe, south east London, also admitted escaping from lawful custody and a jury at Woolwich Crown Court found him guilty of having a firearm with intent to escape from custody.

'PREMIER LEAGUE CRIMINAL' JAILED FOR DARING PRISON ESCAPE



Noel Cunningham Clifford Hubbs

A 'premier league criminal' who was on the run for six years after a daring prison van escape faces eighteen years behind bars.

Rotherhithe men Noel Cunningham, 48, and Clifford Hobbs, 49, were broken out in a 'sophisticated and cunning' ambush when the vehicle arrived at Inner London Crown Court in 2003.

The pair were facing a £1.5million robbery trial when a man dressed as a postman shot a prison van security guard in the knee as they opened a gate to the court.

The postman and another man entered the van and pistol-whipped a different security guard - forcing him to open the cell doors. Mark Gadsden, the prosecutor in Cunningham's case, said the Rotherhithe man had planned his escape after being told 'weeks in advance' of his June 2003 court date.

Cunningham then became one of Britain's 'Most Wanted' men as he was smuggled out of the country and lived under a string of assumed identities in Holland until he was arrested last year.

He was finally brought to justice at Woolwich Crown Court, following a short trial amid tight security.

DS Neil Lemon, from the Met's Trident Command, said: "It is abundantly clear that both Noel Cunningham and Clifford Hobbs are premier league criminals. The prison van escape was meticulously planned and ruthlessly executed.

"The shooting of the Securicor guard was unprovoked and totally unnecessary and has resulted in his being unable to work again. Today's sentence reflects the serious nature of the offences committed and will hopefully act as a deterrent to those considering similar actions."

Cunningham was found guilty of causing grievous bodily harm, possession of a firearm with intent to commit an indictable offence, and possession of a firearm with intent to cause fear of violence, on May 6 following the trial. The charges all relate to his escape from the prison van on June 10, 2003.

Previously, on January 29 this year Cunningham had admitted conspiracy to steal, the original offence he was charged with before he went on the run.

On Friday, at Woolwich Crown Court, the 48-year-old was sentenced to six years imprisonment

for the conspiracy to steal offence, eight years for causing grievous bodily harm with intent and four years for having a firearm with intent to commit an indictable offence, all to run consecutively. He was jailed for a further four years for possession of a firearm with intent to cause fear of violence, to run concurrently.

Cunningham, formerly of Greenland Quay, Rotherhithe, was found guilty of having a firearm with intent to escape, possession of a firearm with intent to cause fear of violence and wounding with intent.

Hobbs, previously of Hull Close, Stave Dock, Rotherhithe, was jailed for life and given a minimum eight-year sentence after admitting conspiracy to steal, escape from lawful custody, and being convicted of having a firearm with intent to escape from lawful custody in January 2008.

Prison van escapee surrenders



Noel Cunningham and Clifford Hobbs

One of three prisoners who escaped from a prison van in London today has given himself up.

Scotland Yard said Tony Peters, who was due to appear in court on a robbery charge, has surrendered himself to police and is currently in custody at a south-east London police station

Earlier, he and two other prisoners - Clifford Hobbs and Noel Cunningham - escaped after men disguised as postal workers opened fire on a Securicor van pulling up to the barrier at Inner London crown court in Southwark, south London.

The driver of the prison van, carrying 10 men to court from Brixton prison, also in south London, was shot in the knee and his colleague was pistol-whipped.

Detective Superintendent Mick Allen of the serious crime directorate at New Scotland Yard appealed to anyone who saw this "audacious" crime to come forward. But he warned that the two remaining escapees are "extremely dangerous" and possibly armed.

"We do not wish anybody to attempt to approach them," he said.

Mr Allen said he believed Mr Hobbs and Mr Cunningham - who were appearing on charges of theft and conspiracy - were the gunmen's intended targets, while Mr Peters, may just have been "pulled into this".

After the escape the men fled through a park called Newington Gardens, just behind nearby Avonmouth Street, and then went into Bath Terrace.

A witness, Trudy Hagan, told Sky news she was upstairs at a nearby social security office when she saw the incident.

"I looked out of the window and I saw a prison van shaking and I heard someone shouting, 'Open the door! Open the fucking door!'"

"I saw somebody come round the front. He was dressed as a post office man. I heard two shots fired and heard lots more shouting."

A spokesman for the prison service said: "The driver was threatened by a man with a shotgun who proceeded to shoot the driver in the knee through the door of the van. The other security staff on board, the passenger, was pistol-whipped.

"The driver got out of the vehicle and there followed an escape from the back of the van by three prisoners."

Mr Hobbs, from Rotherhithe, south-east London, is described as white, 180cm (5ft 11in), stocky, with short brown hair and wearing glasses.

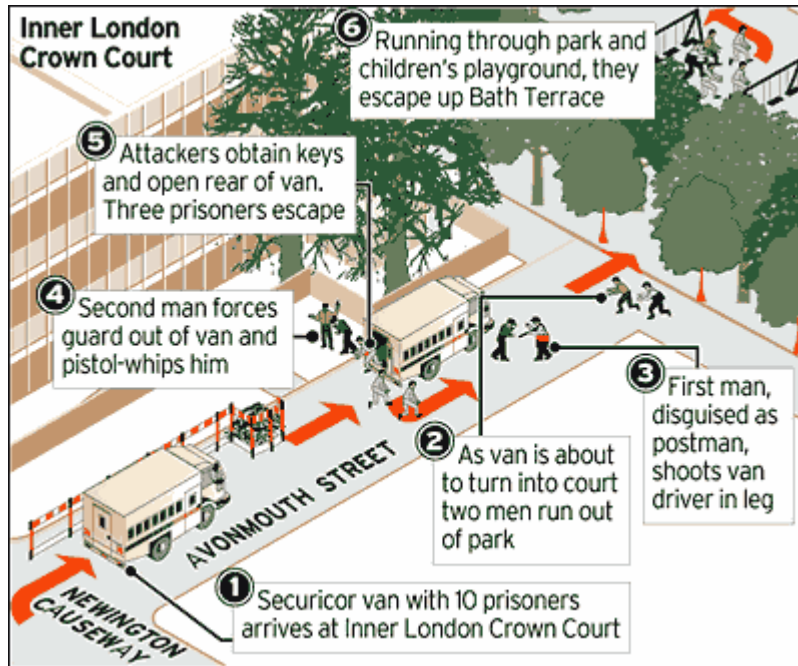
Mr Cunningham, who lives nearby in Greenland Quay, is also white, the same height but heavily built and said to have dark cropped hair.

They and two other men were arrested in south London in March by Flying Squad officers as they allegedly prepared to target a Securicor van loaded with £1.25m.

Most Wanted 'van robber' arrested in Spain



Clifford Hobbs



An escaped prisoner wanted in connection with a £1.25 million security van robbery has been arrested in Spain.

Clifford Hobbs, 47, who has been described as "extremely dangerous", was held in the Malaga area on a European arrest warrant.

Hobbs was sprung from a prison van by armed men in June 2003 as he was being transported to court to face the robbery charge.

He is listed on the Scotland Yard website as one of the force's twelve Most Wanted men.

The arrest follows an operation involving Scotland Yard, the Serious Organised Crime Agency (Soca) and Spanish police. Hobbs will remain in custody in Spain while the UK authorities arrange for his extradition.

Hobbs, and his co-accused Noel Cunningham, 41, were "sprung" by two men - one dressed as a postal worker and both with handguns - who lay in wait for a van taking 10 prisoners from Brixton prison, in south London, to Inner London Crown Court, in Southwark.

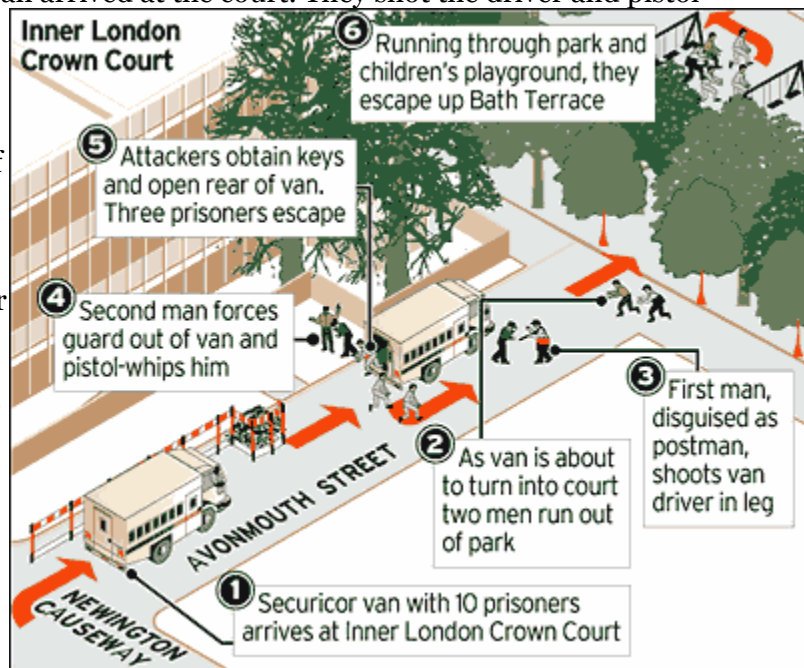
The attackers pounced when the van arrived at the court. They shot the driver and pistol-whipped a colleague across the face.

Police believe that they then stole the men's keys to open the back of the van.

Hobbs, Cunningham and a third man who was not involved in their case, escaped.

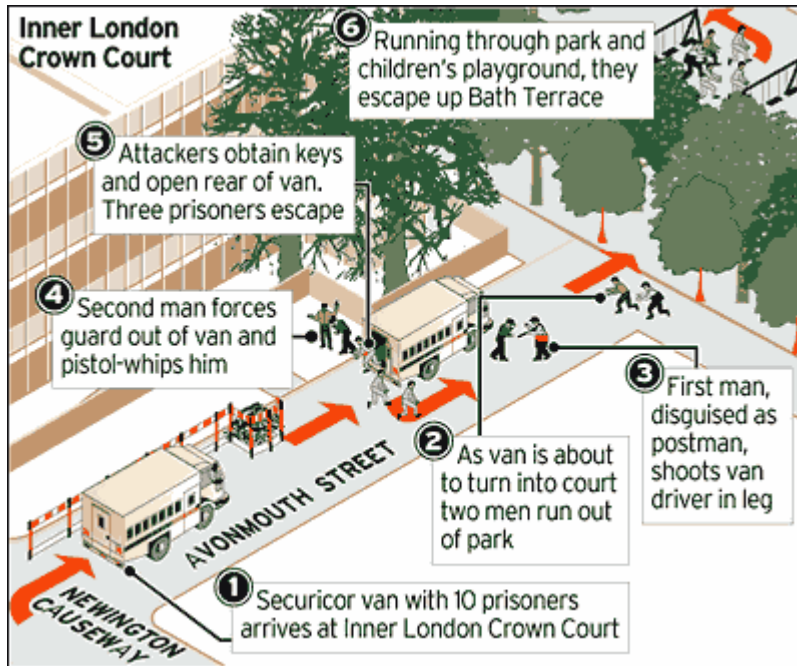
The other fugitive gave himself up hours later but Hobbs and Cunningham were spirited away through the backstreets of Southwark. The seven other prisoners chose not to escape.

Police had warned people not to approach the fugitives, and a £50,000 reward was offered by Securicor for their capture.



Hobbs was jailed for 12 years in the Eighties for his part in an attempt to snatch £430,000 being delivered to the BBC.





TWO dangerous gangland suspects escaped in an armed prison van hijack yesterday - and police believe it was an inside job.

Clifford Hobbs, 41, and Noel Cunningham, 43 - connected to some of the underworld's most notorious hoods - were freed by two men thought to be acting on information from inside van operators Securicor.

One of the attackers was dressed as a postman and had a shotgun hidden in his mail bag.

He and his accomplice waited on a park bench until the high-sided white Daf vehicle arrived on its routine stop at Inner London Crown Court in Borough, South London.



Hiding out ... Noel Cunningham

They then sprinted up to the vehicle as it stopped.

The "postman" took the gun from his sack and pointed it at driver Neil Chetty, 24. He was then cold-bloodedly shot in the leg through the van door.

Police believe it was to terrify a Securicor colleague into opening the rear doors to the prisoner compartment.

After he did, he was pistol-whipped. Eye witness Paul Rhodes said: "The gunman was screaming at the guards 'Get out of the f***ing van'.



On the loose ... Clifford Hobbs
Picture: REUTERS

"Then I heard banging and shouting from inside the van. The men were screaming 'Get us f***ing out **NOW!**'

"A few seconds later a shot rang out. Then I saw the men run off."

Cunningham, Hobbs and their armed helpers are thought to have fled to a getaway car and are now believed to be in a gangland hideout.

A third prisoner among the 10 inside the van also escaped, but later gave himself up.

Police are almost sure the hijack was carried out with inside help.

A Scotland Yard source said: "Vans carrying prisoners are constantly arriving at the court. None of them have any particular features so without help it would be difficult to hit the right one."

Hobbs and Cunningham were due to face trial after an armoured van, also owned by Securicor, was targeted in South London in March.

The duo faced a charge of conspiracy to steal £1.25million. They have links to other gangsters and made jail visits to the Dome Robbery gang.

Escaped murderer John Massey climbed Pentonville prison wall



John Massey is thought to have escaped from within the prison

Convicted murderer John Massey, who has escaped from Pentonville prison in north London, climbed the wall using a makeshift rope, the BBC understands.

It is thought Massey, 64, hid in the prison gym and went onto the roof before scaling the wall using netting.

Massey - serving life for a 1975 pub murder - was reported missing at 18:30 BST on Wednesday. Police say he should not be approached.

The Ministry of Justice has launched an investigation into the escape.

It is thought he used discarded netting, which may have been used for a sports activity, to fashion the makeshift rope.

Massey - one of the UK's longest-serving prisoners - was convicted of shooting dead a man with a sawn-off shotgun at The Cricketers in Clapton, Hackney.

BBC home affairs correspondent Danny Shaw said the escape was a major security breach causing deep embarrassment for the prison authorities.

It is highly unusual for inmates to escape from within the confines of a closed prison such as Pentonville, our correspondent added.

Police want anyone who spots Massey to call 999.



Pentonville prison houses up to 1,250 category B and C male prisoners

The BBC News website understands that Massey had previously escaped from Coldingley prison, in Surrey, in April 1994, and was subsequently reported to be living in Spain before being returned to prison.

Massey was released on parole in June 2007 - after spending the previous 18 months in an open prison on Derbyshire - and ordered to live in a bail hostel in Streatham, south London.

But he broke his curfew after a few months to go and live with his dying father and, after a number of days, was recalled to prison.

After two-and-half years, he was sent to Ford open jail, in west Sussex, from where he absconded.

He was arrested 10 months later and taken to Pentonville before Wednesday's escape.

Up to 1,250 category B and C male prisoners - not the most serious category A offenders - are housed at Pentonville.

Category B prisoners are defined as those "for whom the very highest conditions of security are not necessary but for whom escape must be made very difficult".

Category C prisoners are defined as those "who cannot be trusted in open conditions, but who do not have the resources and will to make a determined escape attempt".

Conditions at Pentonville prison, which was built in 1842, have been heavily criticised by inspectors.

In March 2009, convicted arsonist Julien Chautard spent minutes inside Pentonville before he escaped by clinging to the underside of the security van he had arrived in.

Murderer's prison escape route revealed: Killer hid on roof then used bedsheets to climb to freedom

John Massey is believed to have hid in the prison's gym until he could sneak on to the roof and escape over the 20-foot wall



Wanted Police say John Massey is "potentially dangerous"

Murderer John Massey escaped from Pentonville jail using a makeshift rope, it emerged today.

Massey, one of Britain's longest serving prisoners, is believed to have hid in the prison's gym until he could sneak on to the roof and escape over the 20-foot wall.

It is thought he used a rope made from torn up bedsheets or discarded sports netting to escape from prison for the third time in his 31-year jail sentence.

Scotland Yard has warned Massey, 64, remains "potentially dangerous".

He was jailed for life for shooting a bouncer dead with a sawn-off shotgun outside a nightclub in east London, in 1975. He also attempted to kill a police officer.

A major manhunt is now under way and police are carrying out door to door inquiries to discover his whereabouts.

The Ministry of Justice has launched a major investigation into how Massey – once known as “Big John” in London’s criminal underworld – was able to escape in daylight without being spotted.

A local source said: “My friend who works in the prison said the guy went to the gym and hid in the roof and waited for everyone to go.

”He waited and escaped from there.”

Massey was reported missing at 6.30pm last night – although it remains unclear when he was last seen by prison officers.

An MoJ spokeswoman denied claims he took advantage of low staffing levels at the North London jail caused by budget cuts.

Massey first escaped from prison in April 1994 and fled to the Costa del Sol, calling himself Paul Pascoe while living it up with a topless model.



HMP Pentonville in North London

PA

It was claimed at the time that Massey escaped while playing pool with his two prison escorts during a home visit.

He was captured two years later when armed police swooped after a bar brawl in which two Britons were stabbed.

When Massey was released on parole in June 2007, he was ordered to live in a bail hostel in Streatham, south London, under a curfew.

After several months, he broke his curfew and stayed with his dying father in Kentish Town, north London.

When he was recaptured he was recalled to prison. But two-and-a-half years later he sent to Ford open jail in West Sussex.

Massey reportedly walked out of the prison after hearing news that his sister Carol was gravely ill.

He was rearrested 10 months later and taken to Pentonville, a Category B prison.

Earlier this year he complained in an interview about being returned to jail for visiting ill relatives.

He said: “How are the public in danger of me?”

“I didn’t commit any crime in the time I was free and my mother’s neighbours know and respect me and say I was an asset to the community.”

Speaking about being back inside since Carol’s death, he said: “The pain is excruciating at times but it is nothing compared to the agony I’d be feeling if I hadn’t answered her call.

“I know I have done right.”

Massey’s 85-year-old mother is thought to be still alive and living in nearby Camden.

Scotland Yard said if the public recognise Massey they shouldn’t approach him, instead they should call 999.

Pentonville, in Islington, north London, houses up to 1,250 category B male prisoners, rather than the most serious category A offenders.

Category B prisoners are described as those “for whom the very highest conditions of security are not necessary but for whom escape must be made very difficult”.

Pentonville was described by prison inspectors as one of Britain’s most challenging jails to run last year, but the inspection also found “no obvious problems with physical security”.

Convicted arsonist Julien Chautard escaped from the same jail in 2009 by clinging to the underside of a security van.

He later handed himself in to police and was once again jailed.

Top 10 craziest prison escape attempts

You think you've seen everything? Think again!

inShareo

We thought we'd seen everything when it came to inmate escape attempts, but these guys take the cake. Hopefully it doesn't have a nail file in it! Here are our top 10 picks for craziest escape attempts.

No. 10: This inmate fought his way out through more than a dozen guards using nothing more than homemade nun-chucks. The weapon was made out of a bed sheet and pieces of a chair. His attempt got him out the door and back on the street, but not for very long – he was recaptured without incident a short time later.



No. 9: An inmate who had been assigned to the prison fire crew used his position to nab a fire truck and drive right out the front gate on New Year's Day. He abandoned the vehicle but was taken back into custody at a trolley station.

No. 8: A manhunt in Japan ended when police captured a convict who had bolted from a penitentiary clad only in his underwear. He was found near an elementary school, where he'd gained some more clothing – when authorities brought him in, he was wearing a heavy jacket and a ski cap.



No. 7: Three inmates attempted to use pillow-and-blanket “dummies” in order to evade a head count while they were escaping. Thankfully they were caught during another head count 30 minutes later.

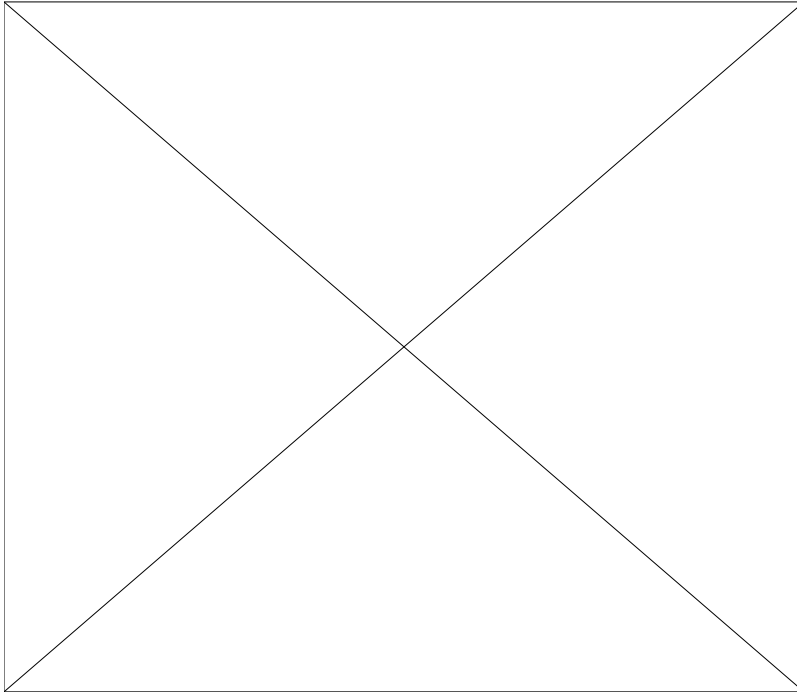
No. 6: Popsicle sticks weren’t necessarily MacGyver’s item of choice, but one inmate managed to break out of jail using them along with a newspaper and a razor blade. Over the course of five months, the man cut through his window and constructed a fake one to cover his escape route – for some reason, once he was out, he decided he’d rather be back in jail and climbed back into his cell using a bedsheet.

No. 5: A prison in Northern Mexico saw the loss of more than 130 inmates when a tunnel was discovered running between the country and Texas. The tunnel was more than 7 yards long, with entry and exit holes that were 4 feet in diameter. It was believed that a prison gang may have helped in this massive prison break.

No. 4: A Michigan inmate thought he had a smart idea when he decided to bury himself in the prison garden, and then wait for officers to leave before trying to make a break for it. Unfortunately for him, his cell mate snitched on him and the inmate earned himself an extra two years onto his original sentence.

No. 3: In what seemed like a scene from a movie, two inmates escaped from a Chicago prison by smashing a gaping hole in a prison window before climbing down 20 stories to the ground using knotted bed sheets. Since their escape, both inmates have been recaptured.

No. 2: Two inmates in Brazil tried to escape from prison by disguising themselves as bags of garbage to be put out by corrections officers. Their plot was foiled when the officers noticed that the bags were “shaking.”



No. 1: An inmate in Mexico came up with the brilliant idea of just having his girlfriend wheel him out the front door in a suitcase – unfortunately for him, she didn't quite have the stomach to pull it off, and tipped off corrections officers by acting anxiously. They inspected the suitcase and found the inmate inside, then promptly returned him to his cell.

prison escape thwarted

August 28, 2012

Associated Press

Save | 

MUSKEGON, Mich. (AP) — An official said a prisoner in West Michigan placed a makeshift dummy in his bed and buried himself in a prison-yard garden in an attempt to escape.

Tom Tylutki, president of the Michigan Corrections Organization, said the escape attempt happened Sunday night at Earnest C. Brooks Correctional Facility near Muskegon.

Tylutki said officers discovered the prisoner missing after his cellmate started acting odd. The cellmate eventually told officers the prisoner was gone.

Michigan State Police officials are handling the investigation.

Bangla inmates stage daring escape from Presidency jail

Two Bangladeshi prisoners escaped from the Presidency jail by climbing over the prison boundary wall early on Tuesday morning. They were identified as Mohammad Sabuj and Mohammad Ali Mollah.

Both prisoners were undertrials lodged in ward numbers 21 and 22 of the jail. Sabuj and

Mollah were entrusted with the task of cleaning toilets in the jail. On Tuesday, they could not be found after seven in the morning and the prison officials suspected that they might have climbed over the boundary wall and escaped. They were arrested on charges of illegally staying in India a few months back.

"Two Bangladeshi prisoners are missing. A lookout notice has been issued against them. I cannot comment any further on this issue," said Bhupendra Singh, warden of Presidency jail.

Generally, inmates are released from their cells at five in the morning and they have to report back to their cells at five in the evening. Cleaners usually get ropes, buckets and smaller instruments to perform their work.

"We are conducting an inquiry into the matter. I cannot comment on the issue before investigations are complete," said Radhe Shyam Sarkar, duty officer of Hastings police station, which is probing the incident.

Prison officials believe that the two undertrials might have misused the instruments allotted to them and they might have been hatching an escape plan for many days. Though it is largely believed that the prisoners escaped on their own or through external help, officials are not ruling out the chance of their being an inside hand.

Tuesday's incident has once again put focus on the poor security measures in West Bengal's jails. Over the last four months more than 400 mobile phones were seized from Presidency, Alipore and Dum Dum central jails, along with a few other jails as well.

Killer spent months on escape attempt

Blade on Popsicle stick cut through bar

Police said inmate Carlos Garcia told them he worked on his escape route for months.

More than 1,200 inmates are housed at the Lea County Correctional Facility in Hobbs where Garcia, 31, is alleged to have made a break for freedom on Aug. 20.

"In the 14 years that I've been here, we've never had an incident like that here," said Officer Mike Stone of the Hobbs Police Department.

Police detectives investigated the case.

Police said early that morning, a guard found Garcia outside. Initially, Garcia claimed he didn't know how he got there.

"He said that sometimes he does crazy things, and he kind of acted like he didn't know what he had done," Stone said. "But then he admitted to doing it."

Court documents show Garcia later spilled the beans and admitted to police that he broke the 6-foot-by-1-foot window in his cell along with the metal bar that went across it.

"The tools that he said he used was a razor blade on the end of a Popsicle stick, and he had worked at it for a while," Stone said.

Garcia told detectives it took him about five months to break the metal bar. He even told detectives he fashioned a fake window out of plastic to make it look like the real window was still there.

Police said Garcia eventually squeezed through the small opening of the window, using bed sheets to propel himself down two stories.

Garcia said once he was out, he had second thoughts and climbed back in.

Department of Corrections officials said on the same day Garcia attempted to escape, they moved him to a maximum security penitentiary in Santa Fe for public safety concerns.

The Corrections Department also said all prison cells are checked regularly.

"I know their measures of security, and security is the utmost of importance to them," Stone said. "This individual didn't make it out of there."

While Garcia claims he could have made it all the way out if he really wanted to, police said that's highly unlikely given the additional levels of security he still needed to go through.

Garcia was convicted of murder in 2005 for killing two young men in the Las Cruces area in 2000. Court records show he was sentenced in 2005 to two consecutive life sentences followed by 55 years, for charges including murder, armed robbery, kidnapping and arson.

After the attempted escape, Department of Corrections officials said they are inspecting all cells statewide to make sure inmates cannot escape. They said they could not comment further on the case pending their own investigation.

Oko prisons: Escaped inmates blew up toilet, says comptroller

The eight inmates who escaped from the Oko minimum security prison in Benin City blew up the toilet, State Comptroller of Prison, Ewulu Jimoh, has said.

Jimoh said 12 inmates ran out but four were re-arrested.

The State Comptroller debunked media reports that gunmen attacked the prison to free the inmates.

He said the inmates escaped without help from outside.

His words: "We heard an explosion at the inmates' toilet and some of them ran out.

"We re-arrested four but eight made it through.

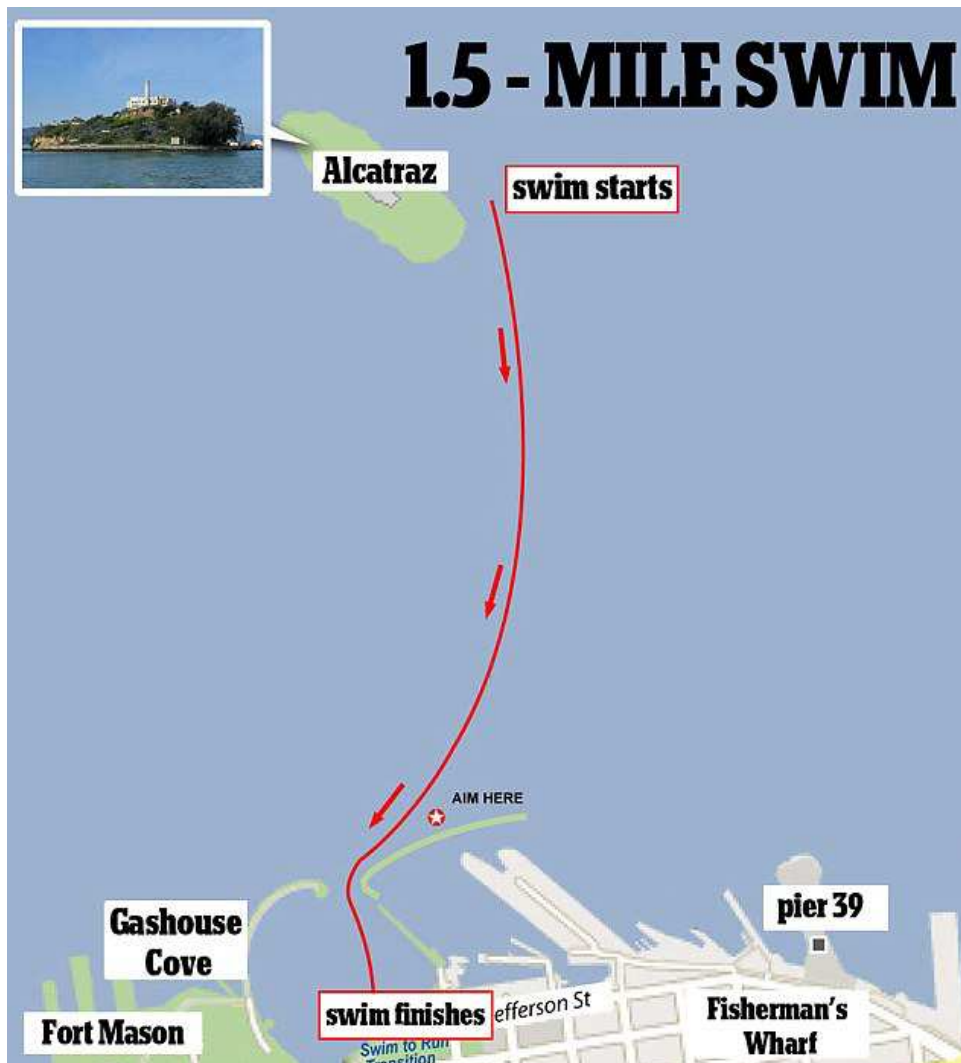
"There was no casualty. The gates were not bombed. Even if they bombed the gates, there was no way inmates could escape because the area is well secured."

The Comptroller said they are investigating to know the device that was used and how the explosives were taken inside.

Commissioner of Police Olayinka Balogun yesterday said he was shown two holes bored into the cell walls and another through the fence made by the inmates.

Olayinka said there was no bomb blast at Oko prison and that gunmen did not invade the prison.

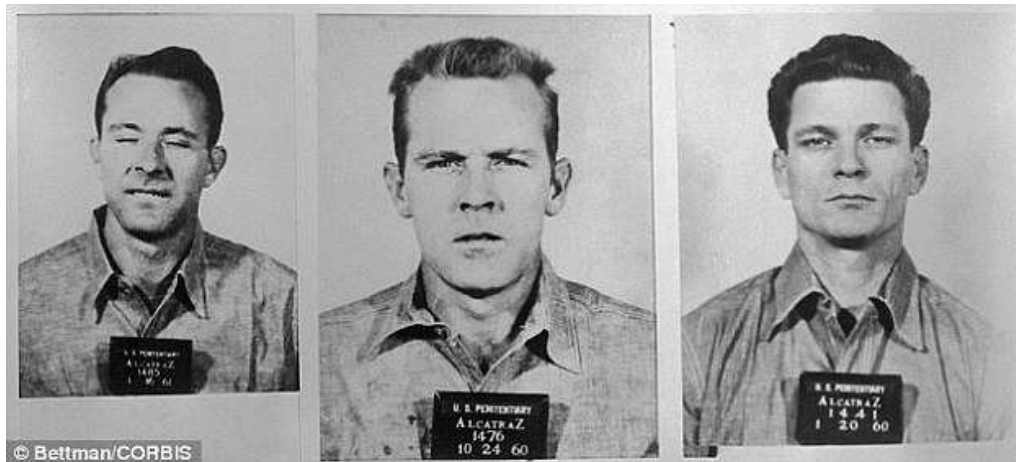
He said the situation has been put under control and that he was waiting for the prison authorities for more briefing.



A RAINCOAT RAFT AND PAPIER-MACHE MASKS: ROCK'S GREATEST ESCAPE

On the night of June 11, 1962, Frank Lee Morris and brothers Clarence and John Anglin climbed through spoon-dug tunnels to escape the 'The Rock', launching themselves into choppy seas on a raft made of rubber raincoats.

The fugitives - all bank robbers - were never found despite one of the biggest-scale manhunts in history.



Mystery: Clarence Anglin, John William Anglin and Frank Lee Morris, pictured from left to right, escaped Alcatraz on a raft made from raincoats. No trace of them was ever found

Officials claim they almost certainly drowned in the turbulent tides of the 10-mile-wide bay, with their bodies swept out to sea under the Golden Gate Bridge.

The legendary prison break, plotted by criminal mastermind Morris, is one of the most intriguing unsolved mysteries of our time and was made into the 1979 film 'Escape from Alcatraz' starring Clint Eastwood.

Just like any other evening, prison guards regularly checked on the prisoners on the night of the escape and noticed nothing out of the ordinary.

But by morning, the three had vanished, leaving pillows and lifelike papier-mache masks with real hair in their beds.

Federal agents, local and state police, coast guard boats and military helicopters scoured the prison complex on Alcatraz Island, then widened the manhunt to the expanse of San Francisco Bay and the surrounding area of Northern California.

The fugitives' raft was found on a nearby island but the three were never found.

The prisoners had spent months digging through an eight-inch-thick wall in their cell block using spoons and butter knives. They disguised the holes with painted cardboard.

On the night of the escape, they squeezed through the tunnels into a utility hallway and then climbed down a drainpipe and through an exhaust vent to the roof.

They slid down another vent and scaled two barbed wire fences before launching the raft they crafted using 50 raincoats from the northeast edge of the island.

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2195284/The-grandmother-escaped-Alcatraz-Jacky-62-braves-freezing-water-sharks-succeed-hundreds-hardened-criminals-not.html#ixzz2501mcWbh>

Man accused of robbery and attempted murder back in Arizona jail after escape

An Arizona inmate being held on attempted murder and robbery charges escaped from his jail cell Sunday before detectives apprehended him hours later in downtown Phoenix, said Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio.

Adan Orduno Jr. gained access to an overhead crawl space by tearing open a hole in the ceiling of his county jail cell, Arpaio said. The crawl space eventually led the 26-year-old inmate to a fence, which he climbed to escape the facility, Arpaio said. Orduno was discovered missing just before 9 a.m. and authorities captured him around 6:15 p.m., according to the sheriff.

"We were fortunate to arrest him quickly," Arpaio said.

Orduno was being questioned by authorities late Sunday and booked on suspicion of escape, the Arizona Republic reported. Officer Christopher Hegstrom, a sheriff's spokesman, said the escape was the first for the 7-year-old south Phoenix facility.

Before his escape, Orduno stripped off his black-and-white jail stripes, placed the suit and milk cartons on his bed and then draped a blanket over the top in an attempt to lead officers to believe he was in his cell sleeping, according to the sheriff.

"He probably escaped with the pink underwear I make all these guys wear," Arpaio said.

The Arizona lawman, who rose to prominence by toughening conditions in his jails, famously forces inmates to wear striped jail suits and pink underwear. The inmates also are banned from cigarettes and porn magazines.

After Orduno jumped the county jail fence, a driver apparently saw him, picked him up and took the suspect to his mother's house, Arpaio said. The suspect was able to change into jeans and a jacket.

Later Sunday, an investigation led undercover officers to arrange a meeting with Orduno at 7th Avenue and McDowell Road in Phoenix, where he was arrested, Arpaio said.

Authorities originally thought Orduno might have been hiding somewhere at the sprawling jail, which also houses Arpaio's famous "tent city" lockup. But jail personnel searched the 600,000-square-foot complex and determined Orduno wasn't here.

The entire facility, which holds about 2,000 inmates, was placed on lockdown once detention officers discovered Orduno wasn't in his cell, the Arizona Republic reported. Authorities also

warned the public to be on the lookout for Orduno, whom the sheriff described as a violent "troublemaker."

Orduno has served time in state prison for burglary, theft and aggravated assault, online state records show.

He was being held at the Maricopa County jail on attempted murder and robbery charges. The Republic reported the charges stemmed from an October 2011 robbery at a Phoenix jewelry store that led to a police chase in which either Orduno or an accomplice fired at pursuing officers. No one was injured.

Orduno had been in custody since Phoenix police arrested him Nov. 4, 2011, and he recently was declared competent to stand trial.

Deputy Chief Brian Lee, another sheriff's spokesman, said the cell that Orduno occupied at the jail's psychiatric ward had a small window. Detention officers look through the windows every 15 minutes to check on inmates, per department protocol, he said.

This Iowa prison break illustrates an important security principle

State Sen. Gene Fraise said he was told by prison officials that the inmates somehow got around a wire that is supposed to activate an alarm when touched. The wall also had razor wire, he said.

"The only thing I know for sure is they went over the wall in the southwest corner with a rope and a grappling hook they fashioned out of metal from somewhere," Fraise said.

Fred Scaletta, a Corrections Department spokesman, said the inmates used upholstery webbing, a material used by inmates who make furniture at a shop inside the prison, to scale the wall. The guard tower in that section of the prison was unmanned at the time because of budget cuts, he said.

"I don't want to say I told you so, but those towers were put there for security, and when you don't man those towers, that puts a hole in your security," Fraise said.

Guards = dynamic security. Tripwires = static security. Dynamic security is better than static security.

Unfortunately, some people simply don't understand the fundamentals of security: State Rep. Lance Horbach, a Republican, criticized Fraise for suggesting budget cuts were a factor in the escape.

"In reality, we should explore why the taut wire system failed to alert guards and security staff that these two convicts were attempting to escape," he said.

Actually, in reality you should be putting guards in the guard towers.

Posted on November 18, 2005 at 03:34 PM

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Comments

Of course, Horbach's intention is not to improve security at the prison, and he probably doesn't actually believe that the tripwire is critical.

A failed tripwire puts the blame on the prison warden, or other low-level prison officials. Budget cuts put the blame much higher up. What is the higher-up going to blame? Just another example of an agenda distorting things.

Posted by: Michael Ash at [November 18, 2005 04:03 PM](#)

Cute. Systems will fail, always, somehow, including the human and artificial components. Horbach knows the operating cost of the human element, but nothing about the value of the human element. (I stole this line from the LISP programmer vs C programmer quote...)

Posted by: Koray Can at [November 18, 2005 04:04 PM](#)

Well said. Incidentally the plot gets thicker when you dig a little on Iowa prisons and their fences. Here's an incident from 2003:

<http://www.prisontalk.com/forums/showthread.php?t=20961>

"The company that supplied a trouble-prone fence at a state prison in which two inmates escaped has not registered to do business in the state since 1998. [...] 'I think it's a travesty,' said Rep. Lance Horbach, R-Tama, chairman of the legislative committee responsible for the Department of Corrections budget. "'We set up the rules. We require compliance. Then we don't even abide by the rules.' [...] Records show Safeguards is incorporated in Georgia, where online Secretary of State records show the company is delinquent in its filings, as well."

Posted by: [Davi Ottenheimer](#) at [November 18, 2005 04:07 PM](#)

Being interested in failures of taut-wire fences, I found an informative article at <http://www.press-citizen.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20051118/NEWS01/511180306/1079>, and a description of what might be the fence used at <http://www.safeguards.com/index.cfm?> ("Products" / "Quick Product Selector" / "DTR Taut Wire System").

Posted by: Anonymous at [November 18, 2005 04:26 PM](#)

There should also be people checking the detection equipment to guarantee its integrity, and people outside the wall watching the wall.

My guess as to the 'how' is a jumper.

Posted by: Roy Owens at [November 18, 2005 06:23 PM](#)

@ Anonymous

Thanks for the link. Some good info in there:

"DOC records obtained by the Press-Citizen after the Oakdale escape revealed that the taut-wire fence might never have worked properly. Records showed that it was a combination of budget, computer and installation problems caused by miscommunication, weather and delay that led to the Oakdale escape -- the first flight from a secured state correctional facility in more than 15 years."

So I would add two more security considerations that should be reviewed after this incident:

1) Technology solutions are always prone to (human) error, thus eliminating the humans in the tower doesn't eliminate the need for humans who can think like guards in the towers

2) Defense-in-depth. How critical was the wire to the perimeter? Did it replace just the guard in the tower, or was it expected to also replace a number of other controls?

Posted by: [Davi Ottenheimer](#) at [November 18, 2005 06:30 PM](#)

The escapees could have scammed security by forcing relentless false alarms ahead of the escape, so that the guards would turn off or disable the alarm. When the guards quick reacting to the deliberate triggering, the escapees would know the alarm was off.

Posted by: Roy Owens at [November 18, 2005 08:15 PM](#)

Sorry Bruce, but I think you downplay the importance of that tripwire. Your article sounds like you think they *shouldn't* investigate why it failed. It may not be the most important failure, but surely it bears a bit more thought, at the very least, no?

Posted by: Mike at [November 19, 2005 12:47 AM](#)

The Representative posits a false dilemma. Investigating why the wire failed does not exclude putting guards in the tower. He pretends that people in favor in one should be opposed to the other, and he seems to have succeeded in channeling the discussion that way :)

Posted by: Richard Braakman at [November 19, 2005 04:15 AM](#)

What we need is less facilities for prisoners - no TVs, no internet access, no access to better schooling than regular folk. If they spent more time in their cells then we wouldn't need so many guards. Prison isn't a punishment any more.

Why exactly is dynamic security better? It costs more and no-one competent in their right mind wants to work as security guards. This is just another pointless GOP bash.

Tell me Einstein, how many terrorists has dynamic security caught, versus intense profiling?

Go and hug a tree.

Posted by: More hyperbole at [November 19, 2005 05:59 AM](#)

If you are going to do that, why not just take them out and shoot them after the have been convicted. It is already too hard for convicts to get jobs after release, if you don't give them any way to earn a reasonable living after release, they are much more likely to return to crime. You are nuts if you think being able to watch TV or use computers with internet connections makes a prison a nice place to stay.

Posted by: Anonymous at [November 19, 2005 08:10 AM](#)

@Hyperbole

- a) stopping prisoners from getting out is very different from keeping terrorists from getting in.
- b) profiling IS dynamic security.
- c) Bruce is for profiling- behavioral profiling, not image profiling.

Posted by: Rich at [November 19, 2005 10:06 AM](#)

"Prison isn't a punishment any more."

Really? Are you saying that you wouldn't mind being locked in prison for a year. Because if you're not, then there is obviously some punishment going on.

There might not be ENOUGH punishment for your tastes, but that's different.

Our society has a very inconsistent view of this sort of thing. Is the goal of prison revenge, rehabilitation, or removal? Some combination of the three? What combination? The answer to that question should drive how we operate prisons. It doesn't.

Posted by: [Bruce Schneier](#) at [November 19, 2005 02:23 PM](#)

"Why exactly is dynamic security better? It costs more and no-one competent in their right mind wants to work as security guards. This is just another pointless GOP bash."

The answer is complicated, but the basic idea is that you're being attacked by a human, and unless you have a human defending you you're at a disadvantage. Static security only works if you guess the attacker's plans correctly. Dynamic security can adapt to whatever the attacker is doing.

Of course, dynamic security is more expensive. Security is always a trade-off, and we get to decide if the additional security is worth the extra money. (Of course people in their right minds want to work as security guards. I know a lot of security guards, and they're not all crazy. It's basic economics: if the salary is high enough, people will gladly do unpleasant jobs.)

I don't know what you mean about Republican bashing.

"Tell me Einstein, how many terrorists has dynamic security caught, versus intense profiling?"

Dynamic security has, near as I can tell, caught almost all the terrorists. Intelligence, investigation, military operations, covert operations -- that's all dynamic security.

Profiling has also caught terrorists. It's behavioural profiling -- the dynamic kind -- that works. It's the static kind -- data mining -- that's a failure.

"Go and hug a tree."

For what purpose?

Posted by: [Bruce Schneier](#) at [November 19, 2005 02:29 PM](#)

"You are nuts if you think being able to watch TV or use computers with internet connections makes a prison a nice place to stay."

Maybe he doesn't have any of those things now.

Posted by: [Bruce Schneier](#) at [November 19, 2005 02:30 PM](#)

"Sorry Bruce, but I think you downplay the importance of that tripwire. Your article sounds like you think they *shouldn't* investigate why it failed. It may not be the most important failure, but surely it bears a bit more thought, at the very least, no?"

I don't mean to downplay the importance of that tripwire, and certainly the prison should investigate why it failed.

In any security story there are many angles. I try to pick the one for this blog that I think is the most interesting; I don't mean to imply that the others are unimportant.

Posted by: [Bruce Schneier](#) at [November 19, 2005 02:31 PM](#)

"Why exactly is dynamic security better? It costs more and no-one competent in their right mind wants to work as security guards. This is just another pointless GOP bash."

It's more effective. It's so much more effective that it's more effective dollar-for-dollar than static security, despite often costing more. Bruce was clearly bringing this article up to talk about security, not the Republican Party. The GOP is mentioned in passing in a quote about security. Unclench, please.

Posted by: [peachpuff](#) at [November 19, 2005 02:41 PM](#)

"Bruce was clearly bringing this article up to talk about security, not the Republican Party. The GOP is mentioned in passing in a quote about security. Unclench, please."

If I thought anyone would go all wacky about this, I would have deleted that sentence. The names of the political parties has nothing to do with the point.

Posted by: [Bruce Schneier](#) at [November 19, 2005 02:56 PM](#)

From the outside, it seems like what you really need is fewer prisoners.

Posted by: Richard Braakman at [November 19, 2005 03:34 PM](#)

The "dynamic = good, static = bad" concept is nice and simple. The only problem is it's too simple.

Security is fundamentally an economic choice. We never have all the resources we'd like to spend on security, and that means we have to prioritize, to mix-and-match. Dynamic security is expensive, but has a great bang for the buck. Static isn't very expensive, but isn't as reliable. You can think of it as a set of linear equations: you want to pick the particular combination of static and dynamic security measures which will give you the best security bang for your buck.

When I'm surfing the Net with an Ethereal window open, I'm an extremely dynamic security measure. That doesn't mean my firewall is bad or useless or superfluous, just because it's a static measure.

Posted by: Rob at [November 19, 2005 10:35 PM](#)

"Security is fundamentally an economic choice. We never have all the resources we'd like to spend on security, and that means we have to prioritize, to mix-and-match."

Definitely. This is the point I try to make again and again. It's the core point of security.

Posted by: [Bruce Schneier](#) at [November 19, 2005 10:50 PM](#)

Static security relies on the intruder performing a set task in order for detection to occur. If the door is alarmed, but not the window, a thief will enter through the window - the door, and its associated alarm, are static ... unable to respond to a different approach.

Monitored security, such as most alarm companies and Counterpane Systems, have human brains on the other end of a range of detection methods/systems. That's not just dynamic security, but defense-in-depth: multiple zones of overlapping and interconnected detection, such that the failure of one zone does not automatically negate the others, nor is there a single path through mutually exclusive zones.

It's a prison fence that has a tripwire, but there are men watching the fence, and men monitoring the wire who are talking to the men watching the fence, and dogs that can be released between the monitored fence and a second fence.

Yes, we want to know why the tripwire didn't work, but we should also be asking why bypassing that one system is get-out-of-jail-free card.

If Mr. Horbach was asking the right question, Bruce would have lauded him for doing so. Making security decisions through the lens of political affiliation is a recipe for disaster.

Posted by: Nick at [November 20, 2005 01:18 AM](#)

Actually, what I said up there is sloppy.

Dynamic security is better than static security. It's not simplistic; it's true. Just like good wine tastes better than lousy wine.

But it's only part of the trade-off. You have to evaluate the costs as well. Good wine is more expensive than lousy wine, and dynamic security is -- in general -- more expensive than static security.

Whether or not the trade-off is worth it is what's important; that's the economic issue.

Posted by: [Bruce Schneier](#) at [November 20, 2005 10:12 AM](#)

>>Whether or not the trade-off is worth it is what's important; that's the economic issue.

But everything is economy; granting a given level of security with minimal budget is the challenge.

Also, I think the 'less guards' plan would have worked better if:

1. It is impossible for prisoners to determine if there are guards in any given tower (one-way mirror windows?)
2. Attempted escape carries a severe penalty

However today, any prisoner with a two-digit sentence is well advise to try and escape; punishment for attempted escape would not double his sentence, but the reward for success would zero his sentence.

This observation has a lesson for computer security, as I see the same myopia in computer security discussions; often, deterrence is not valued enough. compare this to real life (say, grocery stores) deterrence is the only game in town - there is nothing to prevent me from walking into the local grocery store, grab (grocery of my choice) and simply run out. Assuming I can outrun security, I'm home safe. it's the retaliation (spelled p.o.l.i.c.e) that makes that strategy not worthwhile.

If you build a system where $\text{change}(\text{detection}) > 0.5$ and $\text{chance}(\text{conviction}) > 0.5$ and $\text{years_in_prison_for_attempted_hacker_convicted} > 3$, you get an average cost of 1.5yrs for hacking. That would be enough of a deterrant for all but the juciest prizes.

If you are to plan the net Internet, focus on planning it so that security breaches are easily traceble and punishable; investing in security measures such as access control alone does not help society (as opposed to the individual trying to prevent security attacks) reduce the attempts, and ultimately the success, of security breaches.

Posted by: [Yaniv Pessach](#) at [November 20, 2005 04:39 PM](#)

@Yaniv
Interesting point.

Imagine a world where there is an effective deterrent for computer crime. I don't know what that would be, but try and imagine it anyway.

In this world, there is nowhere for experienced security professionals to develop their skills. Nobody wants security because there is no threat.

This would become self-correcting, and the level of threat would rise. This isn't theory, this is what is actually happening. Life is a constant organic tradeoff between risk and reward, a series of self-correcting systems.

Crime is the same. There will always be someone who is willing to commit a crime, just as there will always be someone willing to take the job guarding them, no matter what the pay rate is.

We choose to fiddle the balance by changing the definition of what is a crime, and how important that crime is (= how long you are in prison.) We also fiddle the balance by deciding how much money to spend on the containment of criminals.

If there was no crime, then there wouldn't be any need for criminal investigators, and crime would become easier to commit. Whoops, here we go again.

The ratio of 'prisoners' to 'population' would give an indication of the health of the balance. But fiddling the balance does nothing to address the problems that cause crime in the first place.

Posted by: [Dylan](#) at [November 20, 2005 05:27 PM](#)

Seems to me the example of Counterpane is a useful one: a focus on remote monitoring of technological systems. Just as a trip wire system involves remote monitoring of a technological system.

Why doesn't Counterpane exclusively station an individual in front of my computer monitor 24/7, to monitor only a single computer and no more? Why do they respond to "alarms" of various descriptions, and focus then on the areas that require additional attention?

Clearly dedicating a human monitor 24/7 to my own computer is better than waiting for some trigger event to draw additional attention. And two, three, or more such exclusive-task monitors are better still. But there's a price tag, you say? Piffle. That apparently wasn't a good enough argument in the original post, therefore it isn't accepted as a good enough argument here.

Not all areas of a prison are accessed 24/7. Those areas are quite appropriate to monitor remotely with more ad-hoc patrols to supplement.

Posted by: [Paul O](#) at [November 20, 2005 09:42 PM](#)

@Yaniv

"If you build a system where $\text{change}(\text{detection}) > 0.5$ and $\text{chance}(\text{conviction}) > 0.5$ and $\text{years_in_prison_for_attempted_hacker_convicted} > 3$, you get an average cost of 1.5yrs for hacking. That would be enough of a deterrent for all but the juiciest prizes."

Just to nit a pick:

Since detection and conviction are serial processes (one after the other) and (presumably) independent, then wouldn't average cost be $3 \cdot .5 \cdot .5 = .75$ yrs. Is that still an effective deterrent?

Posted by: Bill N at [November 20, 2005 11:03 PM](#)

I can't tell that the tripwire system was installed to replace the guard tower's function. The tripwire, guard tower and razor wire all seem to be part of the total system.

How was the tripwire defeated? My guess was it was just avoided. It being a static object, you just do like they do in the movies and step over it.

A lot of time objects like tripwires and razor wire are used to slow down people so that they have a better chance of being observed. If you take the observers away then their value drops. Sure they present some level of physical barrier, but it is easy to understand how to defeat that.

The guards in the tower are not security. But they are part of the overall system. Take away one part and the rest is ineffective.

Posted by: ARL at [November 21, 2005 07:02 AM](#)

Did anyone realize how happy the prison was to point out their budget cuts? Now I'm just fishing, but what if the guards deliberately didn't pay much attention to the unmanned corner, knowing that if someone escaped through that corner they would get more funding from an obviously troubled public?

Posted by: Joseph at [November 21, 2005 09:18 AM](#)

"How was the tripwire defeated? My guess was it was just avoided. It being a static object, you just do like they do in the movies and step over it. "

Silly String

Posted by: Probitas at [November 21, 2005 11:19 AM](#)

@ More hyperbole

"Why exactly is dynamic security better? It costs more and no-one competent in their right mind wants to work as security guards."

Profiling candidates to work as any type of guard is extremely important and often overlooked. You'd be surprised how many ex-felons end up getting hired as night guards.

You're therefore correct to say that the guards have issues of their own, but dynamic security by **definition** has a superior number of prevent/detect options than static and therefore better in sheer terms of capability. In other words, your question might be like asking "why exactly would fifty security capabilities be better than one"?

Then again, while more options can be better, they can also introduce new areas of risk and points of failure. Is it better to have a tripwire fail or a guard turn bad?

Posted by: [Davi Ottenheimer](#) at [November 21, 2005 11:51 AM](#)

Here's some interesting background to one of the problems with dynamic security (guards) I mentioned above:

http://www.gsnmagazine.com/feb_05/security_checks.html

"Of the estimated nine million private-sector job applicants on whom the FBI performed background checks last year, some 900,000 of them were found to have criminal histories, according to Steven Fischer, a spokesman at the FBI's fingerprint identification facility in Clarksburg, WV.

'In about 11 percent, it's a match,' said Fischer.

Thus, the odds are slightly better than 1-out-of-10 that the private security guard protecting your office building, nuclear power plant or chemical manufacturing facility has been arrested for, charged with, or convicted of a crime. And those are odds that the new law aims to change."

No mention of the rate of false positives or false negatives...

Posted by: [Davi Ottenheimer](#) at [November 21, 2005 11:57 AM](#)

@Davi:

"You'd be surprised how many ex-felons end up getting hired as night guards."

Ah, reminds of an amusing anecdote. I know someone (who, incidentally, is competent, intelligent and in his right mind, so far as I know) who did a 7 day security guard course to get part time work while he was studying at university. On the first day, they had to fill out a release authorising the agency to ask the police if you were a "fit and proper person" for the work. On the second day, the police came into the classroom and arrested one of the other candidates for burglary! The chump had filled out the release without even remembering the cops were looking for him!

Anyway ...

"Thus, the odds are slightly better than 1-out-of-10 that the private security guard ... has been arrested for, charged with, or convicted of a crime."

Huh? That's not right. 11% was the number of attempted criminal candidates that were thwarted when an FBI check was done. There is no simple relationship between that number and the number who slip through when only a state police check is done, however unless the state police have an extremely high false acceptance rate, it is likely to be a lot lower than 1-in-10.

Posted by: [Roger](#) at [November 21, 2005 08:47 PM](#)

"How was the tripwire defeated? My guess was it was just avoided. It being a static object, you just do like they do in the movies and step over it. "

Note that Rep. Horbach calls it a "taut wire system". This is not the same as a tripwire. A taut wire system is a fence composed of wires under high tension spaced about 15 cm apart, and sets of tension sensing switches in a tamper-resistant enclosure. Near its midpoint each wire is connected to a switch which triggers if the tension rises above or drops below an acceptable window. Older systems used very simple mechanical switches, newer ones may have strain gauges and some preprocessing logic. Thus the system can detect both cutting of the wire or climbing. However there are a number of ways it might fail: turned off, broken fence wires, corroded switches or connections, defeat of the tamper-resistant enclosure, defeat of the signal cable outside tamper-resistant enclosure, fence installed badly and able to be bypassed, etc.

One interesting failure mode is that of being ignored due to false alarms. Taut wire systems are generally regarded as being less prone to false alarms due to wind, animals etc. than are other types of fence alarms (one manufacturer claims an average of 4 false alarms per year per kilometre of fence even in stormy areas). It has been stated that this is dependant on diligent maintenance, especially periodic adjustment of wire tension -- a tedious and difficult job. Obviously, if the fence triggers when the tension falls outside the accepted window, then any deterioration that causes the tension to gradually drift toward one of the cutoff values, will increase the incidence of false alarms. However some manufacturers make taut wire systems which they claim do not require periodic retensioning. This is possible through the use of strain gauges and microprocessors; if the microprocessor sees the strain drift slowly enough, it can adjust the sensing window to compensate.

It would be interesting to know what sensor type was in use at this prison: the old, cheap, but high maintenance electromechanical switches or the new expensive but self-adjusting electronic type. This is especially interesting in light of the prison having suffered budget cuts. It may well be that the same budget cuts which caused guards to be replaced by static sensors, ALSO resulted in reduced reliability of those sensors!!

Hmmm, an interesting twist. Whilst googling to see if I could find out more about this fence, it turns out that the company that installed it has had convicts escape past another of their fences 3 years ago. In that case, the system was working correctly but was switched off because of a misunderstanding by the guards - i.e., poor training.

Posted by: Roger at [November 23, 2005 01:13 AM](#)

@Nill N

>>Just to nit a pick:

Since detection and conviction are serial processes

.. yes. but I said $\text{chance}(\text{conviction}) > 0.5$, not $\text{chance}(\text{conviction assuming detection}) > 0.5$. But anyhow, yeah, the numbers are not that important. What's important is that I know I stand a good chance of taking down a major bank website, and an *excellent* chance of trying to take down a major bank website, with no hard coming to me. OTOH, I know I have a very small chance to write graffiti on the local bank ATM and get away with it. Small wonder, then, that I am efficiently deterred from doing the second, but only my good nature and pleasant demeanor (and the fact that I have a life) stand in my way of doing the first. Accountability is the mother of responsibility.

Posted by: [Yaniv Pessach](#) at [November 23, 2005 02:36 AM](#)

Having spent almost 20 years in over a dozen state and Federal penitentiaries I would like to add as to yet an unspoken premise, and that is that not all prisoners are dumb, do stupid things yes, but not all are dumb. In the 1970's at the Federal Prison in Marion, Il, a prisoner used his expertise in electricity while using the coke machine in the visiting room to generate control over the electrically operated doors and escaped out the front door. I know what kind of responses you have lined up for me, so let me say I've been out 27 years, been married to the same women 25 years and now do public speaking in colleges on subjects related to prison rehabilitation. thank you.

Posted by: Scotirish at [December 2, 2005 07:40 AM](#)

@ Scotirish:

"...thank you."

By all means, thank YOU. :-)

dq.

Posted by: Delores Quade at [December 2, 2005 08:02 AM](#)

As an Iowa resident I find it quite possible to believe that there is no desire what so ever on the part of our state legislature to ensure proper funding of the necessary security in our state prison at Ft. Madison. In particular is the location within the state and the recapture locations of the two felons, one in Illinois and the other in Missouri. The cost to recapture most escapees from the Ft. Madison penitentiary is carried by the Federal Government at the point that the escapees cross state lines, which 70% or more do from this facility. Does anyone else have any ideas on how this bit of security economics works out?

Posted by: IowaResident at [December 21, 2005 12:22 PM](#)

I feel that some of the prisoners in Iowa Prison are there for non-violent reasons; ie:drugs. If there were more ways to rehabilitate these felons, there would be less of them going back. Give them a reason to succeed. Give them a realistic job opportunity. The excessive amount of time for these types of convictions compared to violent crimes is terrible. It just makes things worse for the inmate when he does get out. I would think our goal is to help them be responsible Americans by rehabilitating, cutting down the time they spend in prison, and giving them an education so that they can support themselves and their families.

Posted by: Bright eyes at [January 5, 2006 10:38 PM](#)

I thought this was a blog about SECURITY, not prison rehabilitation.

Posted by: idagirl at [January 12, 2006 01:45 PM](#)

How about a discussion about interlocking doors in prisons. They are run by the c/o using the computer with a mouse, of course, and the doors are "supposed" to open when clicked. But if

you don't upgrade the Microsoft system could that fail? Recently one door being over-ridden for officers to quell a fight did not open until the 4th click. The blame is on the officers and not even the mention of the doors having problems in the past and an outdated system. Any comments? Thanks.

Posted by: Kitt at August 21, 2006 12:44 PM

I don't care to blog, never even been on a site like this before but would like to chat with scotirish and bright eyes on the subject of prisoners since they seemed concerned about the way the system works and so am I. I have a loved one locked up for 15 plus 5 for violating probation and now it reverts back to making an unwise decision to accept a plea agreement that was ridiculous in the first place. At the time all he had was a public defender and too young to know how tough and corrupt the state of MO is.

Company providing prison fences not registered in Iowa

OAKDALE, Iowa (AP) -- The company that supplied a trouble-prone fence at a state prison in which two inmates escaped has not registered to do business in the state since 1998.

Safeguards Technology Inc., based in New Jersey, has not had a certificate of authority to do business in Iowa since Aug. 3, 2000, when the state revoked its certificate for failure to update information.

Even without the certification, Safeguards has contracted with the state for more than \$3 million worth of work at state prisons in Fort Madison, Anamosa and Mount Pleasant.

The state code requires any out-of-state corporation to apply for a certificate to do business. The application gives the state information about the company which must be updated every two years.

"I think it's a travesty," said Rep. Lance Horbach, R-Tama, chairman of the legislative committee responsible for the Department of Corrections budget. "We set up the rules. We require compliance. Then we don't even abide by the rules."

Safeguards President Jeff Curtis did not return phone calls seeking comment.

State officials said they plan to investigate the issue.

The Iowa Medical and Classification Center at Oakdale, the first stop for all inmates as they enter the state's corrections system, had a taught-wire fence installed by Safeguards. Even though the high-tech fencing system was plagued by problems, the state signed off on the project in November and paid the company \$657,000.

Shortly after prison staff disconnected the fence because of a construction project on the prison grounds two inmates, Omar Wilkins, 19, convicted of first-degree murder and Jeffrey Hershberger, 38, sentenced to 15 years for theft, climbed the fence and escaped.

Both were arrested separately in Atlanta weeks after their April 12 escape.

Gov. Tom Vilsack scolded the prison for not taking added precautions and sought a review of all prisons.

Corrections spokesman Fred Scaletta said he was not prepared to comment on Safeguards.

"I was not aware of that situation," Scaletta said Friday. "We would not have any comment at this time. I need to consult with our attorney to see if anything should be done."

Businesses violating the state code for registering face a maximum \$1,000 civil penalty.

"Unfortunately, there is no teeth to it (the law) ... to force these businesses to file, or to cease and desist doing business in Iowa," said Tom Tully, executive officer and assistant director of business with the Iowa Secretary of State's Office. "Very seldomly does the state or any other business for that matter even check with us."

Tully estimated that 90 percent of corporations comply with the law.

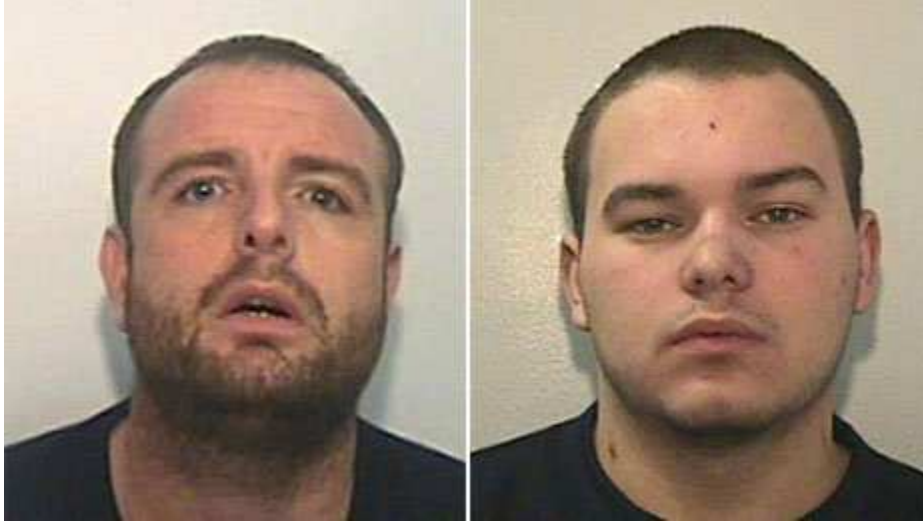
Records show Safeguards is incorporated in Georgia, where online Secretary of State records show the company is delinquent in its filings, as well.

Two dangerous inmates who scaled a wall past an unmanned guard tower to freedom Monday in Fort Madison climbed over a security system made by the same company that installed fences breached by a convicted thief and convicted murderer three years ago at the Oakdale prison.

Iowa Department of Corrections officials wouldn't say whether the taut-wire system at the Iowa State Penitentiary was working Monday when inmates Martin Shane Moon, 34, and Robert Joseph Legendre, 27, escaped.

Authorities captured Moon on Thursday morning in Southern Illinois, and Legendre remains at large. The escape ...

Prison van ambush: Escaped prisoner arrested in Lancashire



Stevie McMullen, left,

has been arrested but Ryan McDonald remains at large

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- **Prison van escapee jailed over raids**
- **Reward to catch escaped prisoners**
- **Three masked men ambush prison van**

One of the two men who escaped from a prison van in Salford last week has been arrested.

Stevie McMullen, 31, from Salford, was arrested along with two other men suspected of helping him escape after police stopped a car in Lancashire.

Mr McMullen escaped on Tuesday when the van taking him from prison to court was rammed by a car and ambushed by armed men.

Ryan McDonald, 20, also from Salford, escaped with him and is still at large.

Police say he poses a "potential danger".

Mr McMullen was arrested on suspicion of evading lawful custody. The two other men, aged 27 and 25, were arrested on suspicion of assisting an offender.

Police stopped the car on the A6 in Lancashire, near to Lancaster University.

Before his escape, Mr McMullen was being transported from HMP Altcourse in Fazakerley, Merseyside to court to face charges of conspiracy to kidnap, conspiracy to commit robbery, conspiracy to commit arson, possession of a firearm, and other offences.

£10,000 reward

Mr McDonald was also in the van, travelling to face sentencing for conspiracy to commit robbery.

He has not been found yet, and Greater Manchester Police are continuing to search for him.

Assistant Chief Constable Steve Heywood said on Sunday: "On Friday, a £10,000 reward was put forward for information leading to the capture of these two men.

"This full £10,000 reward still stands for anyone who gives us information that leads to McDonald's arrest and will be paid when he is back behind bars.

"I would ask members of the public not to approach this man due to the potential danger he poses, but if you see him then please call the police immediately."

The 20-year-old was sentenced in his absence on Friday to seven years and 10 months in prison after previously pleading guilty to conspiracy to commit robbery following his role in a series of raids on pawnbrokers' shops.

He was convicted, along with two other men and a youth, after admitting to a conspiracy involving a pawnbrokers in Manchester and two more in Salford.

The offenders would approach the shops during the day, smash the windows and steal jewellery from the display.

Mr McMullen and Mr McDonald escaped when the prison van carrying them was rammed by a green Saab on a busy commuter road in Salford.

Three armed men in balaclavas then emerged from the van, carrying an axe, a sawn-off shotgun and a handgun, and forced the guards to free the prisoners.

None of the guards was hurt but the two men and their accomplices escaped.

A 24-year-old man and 28-year-old woman later arrested in Ordsall, Salford, in connection with the escape have been bailed by police until 26 June.

Folsom police find escaped prison inmate hiding in truckbed

By Kim Minugh and Bill Lindelof
kminugh@sacbee.com

Folsom police have found the inmate who escaped from a Folsom prison last night and allegedly tried to steal a citizen's vehicle.



Prisoner Marco Cabrera, convicted of assault with a firearm, turned up missing about 9 p.m. Sunday during a head count at the minimum support facility at California State Prison-Sacramento.

Officers arrested him about 6:30 p.m. today after residents of a rural Folsom home followed the barking of their dogs and found the inmate stuck in the bed of their pickup truck, said police spokesman Sgt. Jason Browning.

Cabrera was found with "minor injuries from blackberry bushes," Browning said.

The inmate faces charges of robbery and auto theft in connection with crimes he allegedly committed while on the lam, Browning said. He will be returned to the custody of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, which will charge him in connection with his escape, Browning said.

Folsom police said that even before they were informed of Cabrera's escape, they got an emergency call at 9:19 p.m. Sunday reporting that someone, apparently Cabrera, had taken a vehicle in the 100 block of Esplanade Circle.



Esplanade Circle is in the Empire Ranch neighborhood not far from the prison. Dispatchers were told that the thief's escape in the stolen vehicle was blocked by neighbors, causing the vehicle to crash into a water main.

The thief then got out of the vehicle and fled into a nearby wetlands area. A perimeter was established, but after two hours of combing the area, the search in the nature area was called off.

Folsom police said that 20 minutes after the initial report of the vehicle theft, they were told by prison officials of Cabrera's escape from the minimum support facility, which is about three miles from Empire Ranch.

Police are convinced that Cabrera is the man who tried to take the vehicle.

The inmate was received from Tulare County last year to serve a 5-year sentence for assault with a firearm, transport/selling of marijuana, injury to a spouse, possession of an assault weapon, possession of a firearm by an ex-felon and possession of ammunition by an ex-felon.

CSP-Sacramento, sometimes called new Folsom Prison, houses about 2,800 inmates.

Top photo: Cabrera is taken into custody by Folsom police. Photo courtesy of Folsom police.

Read more here: <http://blogs.sacbee.com/crime/archives/2012/04/authorities-on-the-lookout-for-folsom-inmate-on-the-loose.html#storylink=cpy>

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=aFo8P7RG5Fw

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RzIAPZU-ZK8>

By the ladies.

By Smith, Edward H.

Smith, Edward H. , (1929). You can escape. , (pp. 242-262). New York, NY, US: MacMillan Co, xiv, 364 pp.

Abstract

This chapter considers jail breaks and prison escapes organized by women. They include Lady Nithsdale, who organized the escape of her husband from the Tower of London in 1716; the Comtesse de La Valette, who assisted her husband in escaping from a French prison in the early 1800s, and Maggie Jourdan who helped her lover William J. Sharkey, escape from the New York City Tombs in 1872. This chapter also discusses Gladys Horton, who escaped from prison, repeatedly from the State Reformatory at Bedford. It is just as well to observe that this young feminine escaper used all the technique and all the resources of the best male jail-breakers. She had the persistence and the patience. She watched closely for the flaw in the routine and retentive system till she found it. When her time came, she was actress enough to win her way, and in the high moment she had the coolness and strength to do her deed. But what is more remarkable still, this young girl had been able to plan and arrange for the one thing so many otherwise able male escapers fail to provide — efficient outside co-operation. She was, in truth, a complete jail-breaker in petticoats. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2012 APA, all rights reserved)

Three prisoners flee Goa jail

Wed, Aug 4 2010 9:54 IST | 141 Views

Original Article : <http://www.prokerala.com/news/articles/a156269.html>

Panaji, Aug 4

In a dramatic jail break, two convicts and an undertrial escaped from a prison in Goa by drilling a passage through the cell toilet in the early hours of Wednesday, jail authorities said.

Undertrial Abhijit Patil and convicts Hitler Fernandes and Seby Ferrao escaped from Sada prison located at Vasco, about 35 km from here.

"The jail break must have happened after 3 a.m. Wednesday. They escaped by drilling a hole in their cell toilet," said Levinson Martins, sub-divisional magistrate in charge of the Sada prison affairs.

He said Hitler, 46, was wanted for two murders in Goa and Karnataka.

"Hitler and Seby have a previous history of jail breaks," he said.

A search operation has been launched to track down the three men, police said.

Escape

On November 2, 1979 she escaped the Clinton Correctional Facility for Women in New Jersey, when three members of the Black Liberation Army visiting her drew concealed .45-caliber pistols, seized two guards as hostages and commandeered a prison van.^[178] The van escaped through an unfenced section of the prison into the parking lot of a state school for the handicapped, 1.5 miles (2 km) away, where a blue-and-white Lincoln and a blue Mercury Comet were waiting.^[179] No one, including the guards-turned-hostages left in the parking lot, was injured during the prison break.^[3] Her brother, Mutulu Shakur, Silvia Baraldini, former Panther Sekou Odinga, and Marilyn Buck were charged with assisting in her escape; Ronald Boyd Hill was also held on charges related to the escape.^{[180][181]} In part for his role in the event, Mutulu was named on July 23, 1982 as the 380th addition to the FBI's Ten Most Wanted Fugitives list, where he remained for the next four years until his capture in 1986. State correction officials disclosed in November 1979 that they had not run identity checks on Shakur's visitors^[182] and that the three men and one woman who assisted in her escape had presented false identification to enter the prison's visitor room,^[183] before which they were not searched.^[52] Mutulu Shakur and Marilyn Buck were later convicted in 1988 of several robberies as well as the prison escape.^[184]

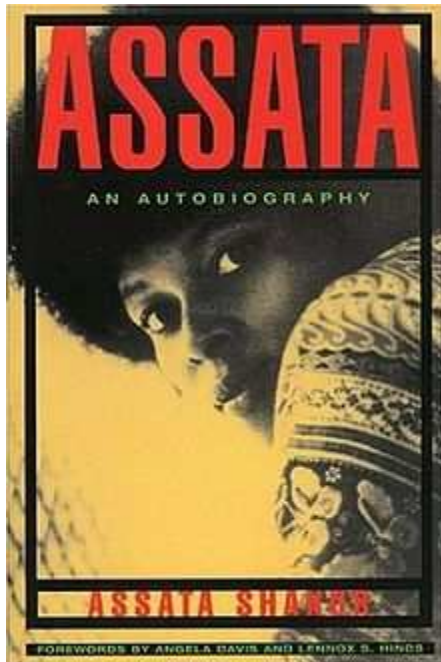


 Shakur in a 1982 photo issued by the FBI

At the time of the escape, Kunstler had just started to prepare her appeal.^[149] After her escape, Assata lived as a fugitive for several years. The FBI circulated wanted posters throughout the New York – New Jersey area; her supporters hung "Assata Shakur is Welcome Here" posters in response.^[185] In New York, three days after her escape, more than 5,000 demonstrators organized by the National Black Human Rights Coalition carried signs with the same slogan.^[181] The ubiquitous image of Shakur propagated by the wanted posters featured a wig and blurred black-and-white features (*pictured right*).^[186]

For years after Shakur's escape, the movements, activities, and phone calls of her friends and relatives—including her daughter walking to school in upper Manhattan—were monitored by investigators in an attempt to ascertain her whereabouts.^[187] In July 1980, FBI director William Webster said that the search for Shakur had been frustrated by residents' refusal to cooperate, and a *New York Times* editorial opined that the department's commitment to "enforce the law with vigor—but also with sensitivity for civil rights and civil liberties" had been "clouded" by an "apparently crude sweep" through a Harlem building in search of Shakur.^[188] In particular, one pre-dawn April 20, 1980 raid on 92 Morningside Avenue, during which FBI agents armed with shotguns and machine guns broke down doors, and searched through the building for several hours, while preventing residents from leaving, was seen by residents as having "racist overtones."^[189] In October 1980, New Jersey and New York City Police denied published reports that they had declined to raid a Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn building where Shakur was suspected to be hiding for fear of provoking a racial incident.^[190]

[edit] Political asylum in Cuba



Assata: An Autobiography (1987), written while Shakur was in Cuba

Murder convict escapes from Yerawada prison

Asseem Shaikh, TNN Aug 17, 2010, 03.58am IST

PUNE: A hacksaw blade and a string of iron pipes tightly secured to each other with a hook at one end were all that this murder convict needed to make a daring and seemingly impossible escape from the high-security Yerawada central prison in the early hours of Monday. The last time a prisoner had escaped from the jail was in 1984.

The convict, Balasaheb Pawar (36) of Ahmednagar, who was serving a life term at the jail, procured the pipes, hook and blade from the jail industry where he was assigned the task of making furniture. He used the blade to cut the grills of the window of his barrack and the pipes to scale three high walls on the outside. He got past a fourth wall by widening a hole in it.

Minister of state for home Ramesh Bagwe, who paid a surprise visit to the jail later in the day, said three prison guards and a hawaldar have been suspended over the incident. He alleged that the escape pointed to a nexus between Pawar, the jail officials and some inmates.

A sessions court in Sangamner had sentenced Pawar to life imprisonment for murdering his relative on August 21, 2009. Pawar was lodged in barrack no.7 of circle no. 3 of the prison. The barrack has 62 inmates and the circle 450 inmates.

The jail, which is spread over 512 acres, holds more than 3,000 prisoners. Circle no. 3 itself is spread over 25 acres and is located around 150-200 metres from the main gate of the jail.

Speaking to TOI, deputy inspector general of prisons (western region) Suresh Chavan said Pawar first cut the iron grills of the window of his barrack with the hacksaw blade. Escaping through the window, he reached the common wall between circle no. 3 and the jail hospital. The wall has a small opening for items that are passed between the jail staff. Pawar widened this opening by removing some loose bricks and went through to reach the hospital wall.

Chavan said Pawar then used his pipe-hook combination to scale the hospital wall. He reached another wall, which has barbed wires on top, and managed to climb over this one too. He then reached the wall of the main gate, probably at a distance away from where the guards are, and again used the pipes and hook to scale it. This wall does not have barbed wires. Incidentally, all three walls are between 16 and 20 feet high.

Pawar is likely to have fled via the jail road sometime between 4 am and 5 am. His escape came to light when the roll call of the inmates was taken at 7 am.

Chavan said, "The jail guards conducted a search but could not find Pawar. An inmate told us that he was sleeping. However, when the guards went to his barrack, they found pillows on the bed with a bedsheet over them to give the impression that he was still asleep."

Chavan said Pawar will be lodged in the security cell of the jail if he is re-arrested. He will not be given any task in the jail industry.

Theft convict escapes from Byculla prison

Mateen Hafeez, TNN Apr 8, 2013, 06.24PM IST

MUMBAI: A 27-year-old theft convict, who was brought to the Byculla jail 10 days ago, escaped on Monday morning while he was brought outside the jail to clean the premises. A case of prisoner escaping from the jail has been registered with the Nagpada police station.

Jail officials identified the escaped convict as Surya David John, a resident of Tardeo. "He was involved in a theft case of railway protection force (RPF) and the court convicted him for a month. John was brought to Byculla jail on March 28 and was to be released on April 28. However, he managed to escape while cleaning the premises," said a jail official. Vinod Lokhande, inspector-general of Prisons (south region), said, "We have started an inquiry into the escape and will punish the guilty."

The incident took place at around 10.15 am. Five police constables chased John who ran from the jail but failed. The policemen could not catch John who proved to be fastest than the cops. "There are reports that he was a drug addict and might have fled due to the non-availability of drugs," said a policeman. Designated as Qaidi number 52964, John did not reach home till afternoon. A police team also visited his home. "We are trying to re-arrest him," said a Nagpada police officer.

Escape from Camp 14: One Man's Remarkable Odyssey from North Korea to Freedom in the West by Blaine Harden

There was torture, starvation, betrayals and executions, but to Shin In Geun, Camp 14 – a prison for the political enemies of North Korea – was home. Then one day came the chance to flee...

His first memory is an execution. He walked with his mother to a wheat field, where guards had rounded up several thousand prisoners. The boy crawled between legs to the front row, where he saw guards tying a man to a wooden pole.

Shin In Geun was four years old, too young to understand the speech that came before that killing. At dozens of executions in years to come, he would listen to a guard telling the crowd that the prisoner about to die had been offered “redemption” through hard labour, but had rejected the generosity of the North Korean government.

Guards stuffed pebbles into the prisoner’s mouth, covered his head with a hood and shot him.

In Camp 14, a prison for the political enemies of North Korea assemblies of more than two inmates were forbidden, except for executions. Everyone had to attend them.

The South Korean government estimates there are about 154,000 prisoners in North Korea’s labour camps, while the US state department puts the number as high as 200,000. The biggest is 31 miles long and 25 miles wide, an area larger than the city of Los Angeles. Numbers 15 and 18 have re-education zones where detainees receive remedial instruction in the teachings of Kim Jong-il and Kim Il-sung, and are sometimes released. The remaining camps are “complete control districts” where “irredeemables” are worked to death.

Shin’s camp, number 14, is a complete control district. Established around 1959 near Kaechon County in South Pyongan Province, it holds an estimated 15,000 prisoners. About 30 miles long and 15 miles wide, it has farms, mines and factories threaded through steep mountain valleys.

Shin and his mother lived in the best prisoner accommodation the camp had to offer. They had their own room, where they slept on a concrete floor, and they shared a kitchen with four other families. Electricity ran for two hours a day. There were no beds, chairs or tables. No running water.

If Shin's mother met her daily work quota, she could bring home food. At 4am, she would prepare breakfast and lunch for her son and for herself. Every meal was the same: corn porridge, pickled cabbage and cabbage soup. Shin was always hungry and he would eat his lunch as soon as his mother left for work. He also ate her lunch. When she came back from the fields at midday and found nothing to eat, she would beat him with a shovel.

Her name was Jang Hye Gyung. She never talked to him about her past, her family, or why she was in the camp, and he never asked. His existence as her son had been arranged by the guards. They chose her and the man who became Shin's father as prizes for each other in a "reward" marriage.

Single men and women slept in dormitories segregated by sex. The eighth rule of Camp 14 said, "Should sexual physical contact occur without prior approval, the perpetrators will be shot immediately." A reward marriage was the only safe way around the no-sex rule. Guards announced marriages four times a year. If one partner found his or her chosen mate to be unacceptably old, cruel or ugly, guards would sometimes cancel a marriage. If they did, neither the man nor the woman would be allowed to marry again. Shin's father, Shin Gyung Sub, told Shin that the guards gave him Jang as payment for his skill in operating a metal lathe.

After their marriage, the couple were allowed to sleep together for five consecutive nights. From then on, Shin's father was permitted to visit Jang a few times a year. Their eldest son, Shin He Geun, was born in 1974. Shin was born eight years later. The brothers barely knew each other. By the time Shin was four, his brother had moved into a dormitory.

The guards taught the children they were prisoners because of the "sins" of their parents but that they could "wash away" their inherent sinfulness by working hard, obeying the guards and informing on their parents.

One day, Shin joined his mother at work, planting rice. When she fell behind, a guard made her kneel in the hot sun with her arms in the air until she passed out. Shin did not know what to say to her, so he said nothing.

On summer nights, boys would sneak into a nearby orchard to eat unripe pears. When they were caught, the guards would beat them. The guards, though, did not care if Shin and his friends ate rats, frogs, snakes and insects. Eating rats was essential to survival. Their flesh could help prevent pellagra, which was rampant, the result of a lack of protein and niacin in their diet.

Prisoners with the disease suffered skin lesions, diarrhoea and dementia. It was a frequent cause of death. Catching rats became a passion for Shin. He would meet his friends in the evening at his primary school, where there was a coal grill to roast them.

One day in June 1989, Shin's teacher, a guard who wore a uniform and a pistol on his hip, sprang a surprise search of the six-year-olds. When it was over, he held five kernels of corn. They all belonged to a slight girl Shin remembers as exceptionally pretty. The teacher ordered the girl to the front of the class and told her to kneel. Swinging his wooden pointer, he struck her on the head again and again. As Shin and his classmates watched in silence, lumps puffed up on her skull, blood leaked from her nose and she toppled over on to the concrete floor. Shin and his classmates carried her home. Later that night, she died.

On a hillside near Shin's school, a slogan was posted: "All according to the rules and regulations." The boy memorised the camp's 10 rules, and can still recite them by heart. Subsection three of Camp 14's third rule said, "Anyone who steals or conceals any foodstuffs will be shot immediately." Shin thought the girl's punishment was just. The same man continued to teach Shin. In breaks, he allowed students to play rock, paper, scissors. On Saturdays, he would sometimes grant children an hour to pick lice out of each other's hair. Shin never learned his name.

Primary school students attended class six days a week. Secondary students attended seven days, with one day off a month. In the winter, the student body (about 1,000 students) was mobilised to clean privies in the village where the guards lived. Shin and his classmates chipped out frozen faeces, dumped the waste on racks with their bare hands, then dragged it outside to be used as fertiliser. In summer, students worked in the fields from 4am until dusk, pulling weeds.

Soap was a luxury. Shin's trousers were stiff from dirt and sweat. When it was too cold to bathe in the river or stand in the rain, Shin, his mother and classmates smelled like farm animals.

Shin went through school with a boy called Hong Sung Jo and a girl called Moon Sung Sim. Shin viewed Hong Sung Jo as his closest companion. They played jacks and their mothers worked at the same farm. Neither boy, though, ever invited the other to his house to play. Trust among friends was poisoned by constant competition. Trying to win extra food rations, children told guards what their neighbours were eating, wearing and saying.

Shin was nine years old, and he and his classmates were walking towards the train station, where their teacher had sent them to pick up coal. To get there they had to pass below the guards' compound. From above, the guards' children shouted: "Reactionary sons of bitches are coming." Rocks rained down on the prison children. Shin and his classmates shrieked and cowered. A rock struck Shin on the head, knocking him to the ground. When his head cleared, many of his classmates were moaning and bleeding. Moon Sung Sim had been knocked out.

When their teacher discovered his bloodied students sprawled in the road, he became angry. "What are you doing not getting yourselves to work?" he shouted. The students timidly asked what they should do with their classmates who were unconscious. "Put them on your backs and carry them," the teacher instructed.

When Shin and his classmates entered secondary school, they were barely literate. But by then classroom instruction had come to an end. Teachers became foremen. Secondary school was a staging ground for work in mines, fields and forests. At the end of the day, it was a gathering place for long sessions of self-criticism. At night, 25 boys slept on the dormitory floor.

On Friday 5 April 1996, Shin's teacher told him he could go home and eat supper with his mother as a reward for good behaviour. There was a surprise when he got there. His brother, who worked at the camp's cement factory, had come home, too. Shin's mother was not delighted when her youngest son showed up. She did not say welcome or that she had missed him. She cooked, using her daily ration of 700 grams of cornmeal to make porridge in the one pot she owned. Shin ate, then went to sleep.

Some time later, voices from the kitchen woke him. He peeked through the bedroom door. His mother was cooking rice. For Shin, this was a slap in the face. He had been served the same tasteless gruel he had eaten every day of his life. Now his brother was getting rice. Shin guessed she must have stolen it, a few grains at a time. Shin fumed. He also listened. Shin heard that Shin He Geun had not been given the day off. He had walked out without permission. His mother and brother were discussing what they should do.

Escape. Shin was astonished to hear his brother say the word. He did not hear his mother say that she intended to go along. But she was not trying to argue, even though she knew that if he escaped or died trying, she and others in her family would be tortured and probably killed. Every prisoner knew the first rule of Camp 14, subsection 2: "Any witness to an attempted escape who fails to report it will be shot immediately."

His heart pounded. He was angry that she would put his life at risk for the sake of his brother. He was also jealous that his brother was getting rice. Shin's camp-bred instincts took over: he had to tell a guard. Shin ran back to school. It was 1am. Who could he tell? In the crowded dormitory, Shin woke his friend Hong Sung Jo. Hong told him to tell the school's night guard.

"I need to say something to you," Shin told the guard, "but before I do, I want something in return." Shin demanded more food and to be named grade leader at school, a position that would allow him to work less and not be beaten as often. The guard agreed, then told Shin and Hong to go back to get some sleep.

On the morning after he betrayed his mother and brother, uniformed men came to the schoolyard for Shin. He was handcuffed, blindfolded and driven in silence to an underground prison.

"Do you know why you are here?" The officer did not know, or did not care, that Shin had been a dutiful informer. "At dawn today, your mother and your brother were caught trying to escape. Were you aware of this fact or not? If you want to live, you should spit out the truth."

Shin would eventually figure out that the night guard had claimed the credit for discovering the escape plan. But on that morning Shin understood nothing. He was a bewildered 13-year-old. Finally, the officer pushed some papers across his desk. "In that case, bastard, your thumbprint."

The document was a family rap sheet. The papers explained why his father's family had been locked up in Camp 14. The unforgivable crime Shin's father had committed was being the brother of two young men who had fled south during the Korean war. Shin's crime was being his father's son.

Shin's cell was barely large enough for him to lie down. Without windows, he could not distinguish night from day. He was given nothing to eat and could not sleep.

On what seemed to be the morning of the third day, guards wordlessly entered Shin's cell, shackled his ankles, tied a rope to a hook in the ceiling and hung him upside down. They did not return until evening. On the fourth day, the interrogators wore civilian clothes. Marched from his cell, Shin met them in a dimly lit room. A chain dangled from a winch on the ceiling. Hooks

on the walls held a hammer, axe, pliers and clubs. On a table, Shin saw the kind of pincers used for carrying hot metal.

“If you tell the truth right now, I’ll save you,” the chief interrogator said. “If not, I’ll kill you. Understand?”

The chief’s lieutenants pulled off Shin’s clothes and trussed him up. When they were finished, his body formed a U, his face and feet toward the ceiling, his bare back toward the floor. The chief interrogator shouted more questions. A tub of burning charcoal was dragged beneath Shin, then the winch lowered towards the flames. Crazy with pain and smelling his burning flesh, Shin twisted away. One of the guards grabbed a hook and pierced the boy in the abdomen, holding him over the fire until he lost consciousness.

Shin awoke in his cell, soiled with excrement and urine. His back was blistered and sticky. The flesh around his ankles had been scraped away. As his burns became infected, he grew feverish and lost his appetite.

Shin guesses it was 10 days before his final interrogation. It took place in his cell because he was too weak to get up. For the first time, he found the words to defend himself. “I was the one who reported this,” he said. “I did a good job.” His interrogators didn’t believe him. He begged them to talk to Hong Sung Jo.

Shin’s fever grew worse and the blisters on his back swelled with pus. His cell smelled so bad, the guards refused to step inside. After several days Shin was carried to another cell. He’d been granted a reprieve. Hong had confirmed his story. Shin would never see the school’s night guard again.

By the standards of Camp 14, Shin’s new cellmate was notably old, somewhere around 50. He refused to explain why he was locked up but he did say he had been there for many years and that he sorely missed the sun. Pallid, leathery skin sagged over his fleshless bones. His name was Kim Jin Myung. He asked to be called “Uncle”. For about two months, Uncle nursed Shin, rubbing salty cabbage soup into his wounds as a disinfectant and massaging Shin’s arms and legs so his muscles would not atrophy. “Kid, you have a lot of days to live,” Uncle said. “They say the sun shines even on mouse holes.”

The old man's medical skills and caring words kept the boy alive. His fever waned, his mind cleared and his burns congealed into scars. Shin was grateful but he also found it puzzling. He had not trusted his mother to keep him from starving. At school, he had trusted no one and informed on everyone. In return, he expected abuse and betrayal. In the cell, Uncle slowly reconfigured those expectations.

"Uncle, tell me a story," Shin would say. The old man described what food outside the fence looked, smelled and tasted like. Thanks to his loving descriptions of roasting pork, boiling chicken and eating clams at the seashore, Shin's appetite came back with a vengeance. Shin guessed he had once been an important and well-educated man.

One day a guard unlocked the door of Shin's cell and handed him his school uniform.

"Let me hold you once," Uncle said, grasping both of Shin's hands tightly. Shin did not want to leave. He had never trusted – never loved – anyone before. In the years ahead, he would think of the old man far more often than he thought of his parents. But he never saw Uncle again.

Instead, Shin was led to the room where, in April, he had first been interrogated. Now, it was November. Shin had just turned 14. He had not seen the sun for more than half a year. What he saw startled him: his father knelt in front of two interrogators who sat at their desks. Kneeling beside him, Shin saw his father's right leg canted outwards in an unnatural way. Shin Gyung Sub had also been tortured.

After signing a secrecy form, father and son were handcuffed, blindfolded and driven away. Shin guessed they would be released but when the car stopped after about 30 minutes and his blindfold was removed, he panicked. A crowd had gathered. Shin was now certain he and his father were to be executed. He became acutely aware of the air passing into and out of his lungs. He told himself these were the last breaths of his life.

"Execute Jang Hye Gyung and Shin He Geun, traitors of the people," the senior officer said. Shin looked at his father. He was weeping silently. When guards dragged her to the gallows, Shin saw that his mother looked bloated. They forced her to stand on a wooden box, gagged her, tied her arms behind her back and a noose around her neck. She scanned the crowd and found Shin. He refused to hold her gaze. When guards pulled away the box, she jerked about desperately. As he watched his mother struggle, Shin thought she deserved to die.

Shin's brother looked gaunt as guards tied him to the wooden post. Three guards fired their rifles three times. He thought his brother, too, deserved it.

Back at school, Shin's teacher was furious he had not received any credit for uncovering the escape plot. Shin was made to kneel for hours and denied permission to use the toilet. Classmates snatched his food, punched him and called him names. Shin had lost much of his strength and his return to hard labour made him almost insanely hungry. In the cafeteria, he dipped his hand in soup that had spilled on the floor and licked his fingers clean. He searched for grains of rice, beans or cow dung that contained undigested kernels of corn.

Since prison, Shin was conscious of what he could never eat or see. The filth, stink and bleakness of the camp crushed his spirit. He discovered loneliness, regret and longing. Most of all, he was angry with his parents. He blamed his mother for his torture and the abuse at school. He despised both his mother and father for selfishly breeding in a labour camp, for producing offspring doomed to die behind barbed wire.

In the moments after Shin's mother and brother were killed, Shin's father had tried to comfort the boy. "You OK? Are you hurt anywhere?" his father asked repeatedly. Shin was too angry to reply.

On his rare days off from school, Shin was expected to see his father. During the visits, Shin would often refuse to speak. His father tried to apologise. "I know you're suffering because you have the wrong parents," he told Shin. "You were unlucky to be born to us. What can you do? Things just turned out this way."

By March 1997, about four months after his release, starvation had become a real possibility. Harassed by his teacher and fellow students, Shin could not find enough nourishment. His scars still bled. He grew weaker and often failed to complete his work assignments, which led to more beatings, less food, more bleeding.

But then Shin had a break. One morning, the teacher who tormented him was gone. The new teacher sometimes sneaked food to Shin. He also assigned him less arduous work and stopped the bullying. Shin put on some weight. The burns healed. Why the new teacher made the effort, Shin never knew. But Shin is certain that without his help he would have died.

In 1998 Shin was working alongside thousands of prisoners building a hydroelectric dam on the Taedong river. Labour continued round the clock, with most of the digging and construction done by workers using shovels, buckets and bare hands. Shin had seen prisoners die in the camp before – of hunger, illness, beatings and at executions – but not as a routine part of work. The greatest loss of life occurred when a flash flood rolled down the Taedong in July 1998, sweeping away hundreds of dam workers and students. Shin was quickly put to work burying their bodies.

The following year, secondary school came to an end. At 16, it was time for a permanent job. Shin's teacher handed down assignments without explanation, curtly telling students where they would spend the rest of their lives. More than half of Shin's class were sent to the coalmines, where accidental death from cave-ins, explosions and gas poisonings was common. Most miners developed black lung disease and died in their 40s, if not before. Moon Sung Sim was assigned to the textile factory. Hong Sung Jo was sent to the mines. Shin never saw him again.

Shin was assigned the pig farm where he snacked on corn, cabbage and other vegetables, and sometimes even sneaked an afternoon nap. Turning 20 on the farm, Shin believed he had found the place where he would grow old and die. But in March 2003 he was transferred to the camp's garment factory where 1,000 women stitched military uniforms during 12-hour shifts. When their foot-powered sewing machines broke down, Shin fixed them.

In the summer of 2004, while he was carrying one of these cast-iron machines, it slipped and broke beyond repair. Sewing machines were considered more valuable than prisoners: the chief foreman grabbed Shin's right hand and hacked off his middle finger just above the first knuckle.

Nevertheless, in October the factory superintendent ordered Shin to mentor an important new prisoner. Shin was to teach Park Yong Chul how to fix sewing machines and to become his friend. Shin was to report back on everything Park said about his past, his politics and his family. "Park needs to confess," the superintendent said. "He's holding out on us."

Park paid polite attention to Shin's instructions and just as politely avoided questions about his past. After four weeks of near silence, Park surprised Shin with a personal question: "Sir, where is your home?"

"My home?" Shin said. "My home is here."

“I am from Pyongyang, sir,” Park said.

Park was a dignified man in his mid-40s, but this linguistic fussiness annoyed and embarrassed Shin.

“I’m younger than you,” Shin said. “Please drop the honorific with me.”

“I will,” Park said.

“By the way,” Shin asked, “where is Pyongyang?”

Shin’s question stunned Park. He explained that Pyongyang, located about 50 miles south of Camp 14, was the capital of North Korea, the city where the country’s powerful people lived. Park said he had grown up there, studying in East Germany and the Soviet Union. After returning home, he had become chief of a taekwondo training centre. Park explained what life was like outside Camp 14. He told Shin about money, television, computers and mobile phones. He explained that the world was round.

Much of what Park talked about was difficult for Shin to understand, believe or care about. What delighted him – what he kept begging for – were stories about eating. Park described chicken, pork and beef in China, Hong Kong, Germany, England and the former Soviet Union. Intoxicated, Shin made perhaps the first free decision of his life. He chose not to snitch.

Park’s stories became an addiction but when he burst into song one night, Shin was alarmed, afraid a foreman might hear.

“Stop at once,” Shin told him.

Shin had never sung a song. His only exposure to music had been on the farm, when trucks with loudspeakers played military marching music. To Shin, singing seemed unnatural and insanely risky.

Park asked why he was so afraid of a little song when he was willing to hear seditious stories about how Kim Jong-il was a thief and North Korea was a hellhole.

In December 2004, Shin began thinking about escape. Park's spirit, his dignity and his incendiary information gave Shin a way to dream about the future. He suddenly understood where he was and what he was missing. Camp 14 was no longer home; it was a cage. And Shin now had a well-travelled friend to help him get out.

Their plan was simple – and insanely optimistic. Shin would get them over the fence. Park would lead them to China, where his uncle would help them travel on to South Korea. Before he suggested they escape together, Shin had fretted for days that Park might be an informer and that he would be executed like his mother and brother. Even after Park embraced the idea, Shin was paranoid: he had sold out his own mother; why shouldn't Park sell him out?

But Shin's excitement overcame his fear. For the first time, he had something to look forward to. Every working day became a marathon of whispered motivational stories about the fine dining awaiting them in China. They decided that if guards discovered them at the fence, Park would take them out using taekwondo.

Shin stole warm clothes from a fellow prisoner and waited. Their chance came at New Year, a rare holiday when machines in the factory went silent for two days. Shin learned in late December that on 2 January his crew of repairmen would spend the day trimming trees and stacking wood on a mountain ridge near the fence.

Shin paid a final visit to his father. Their relationship, always distant, had grown colder still. They shared a sullen New Year's supper. Shin made no reference to his escape plan, there was no special goodbye. Shin expected that when the guards learned of his escape, they would come for his father and take him back to the underground prison.

Early the next morning, Shin, Park and about 25 other prisoners set to work near the top of a 1,200ft slope. The sun shone brightly on a heavy snow pack. A guard tower rose from the fence line about a quarter of a mile to the north. Guards patrolled the inside perimeter with automatic weapons. Shin noticed lengthy intervals between patrols.

Shin and Park had decided they would wait until dusk, when it would be more difficult for guards to track their footsteps in the snow. At four o'clock, they sidled towards the fence, trimming trees as they moved. Shin found himself facing 10ft of high-voltage barbed wire.

"I don't know if I can do this," Park whispered. "Can't we try it some other time?"

Shin feared it would be months, even years, before they would have another chance. "Let's run!" he yelled and grabbed Park's hand. He slipped and Park was first to the fence. Falling to his knees, he shoved his arms, head and shoulders between the two lowest strands of wire. Shin saw sparks and smelled burning flesh. Before he could get to his feet, Park had stopped moving. The weight of his body pulled down the bottom wire, creating a small gap. Without hesitation, Shin crawled over his friend's body. He was nearly through when his legs slipped off Park's torso and came into contact with the wire.

When he cleared the fence, Shin ran downhill for about two hours. He heard no alarms, no gunfire, no shouting. As the adrenaline began to ebb, he noticed that his trouser legs were sticky. He rolled them up, saw blood and began to comprehend the severity of his burns. It was very cold, well below 10F, and he had no coat.

Park, dead on the fence, had not told him where he might find China.

Shin broke into a farmer's shed. Inside, he discovered a military uniform. No longer a runaway prisoner, he had become just another ill-clothed, ill-nourished North Korean.

Before Shin crawled through that electric fence and ran off into the snow, no one born in a North Korean political prison camp had ever escaped. As far as can be determined, Shin is still the only one to do so.

He was 23 years old and knew no one. He slept in pig pens, haystacks and freight trains. He ate whatever he could find. He stole and traded on the black market. He was helped, exploited and betrayed. His legs hurt and he was hungry and cold, yet he was exhilarated. He felt like an alien fallen to earth.

In late January 2005, he walked all day – about 18 miles – looking for a stretch of the Tumen river to cross into China. Pretending to be a soldier, he bribed his way through border checkpoints with crackers and cigarettes. “I’m dying of hunger here,” the last soldier said. He looked to be about 16. “Don’t you have anything to eat?” Shin gave him bean-curd sausage, cigarettes and a bag of sweets.

Shallow and frozen, the river here was about a hundred yards wide. He began to walk. Halfway across, he broke through and icy water soaked his shoes. He crawled the rest of the way to China.

Within two years, he was in South Korea. Within four, he was living in southern California, an ambassador for Liberty in North Korea (LiNK), an American human rights group.

His name is now Shin Dong-hyuk. His overall physical health is excellent. His body, though, is a roadmap of the hardships of growing up in a labour camp that the North Korean government insists does not exist. Stunted by malnutrition, he is short and slight – 5ft 6in and about 120lb (8.5 stone). His arms are bowed from childhood labour. His lower back and buttocks are covered with scars. His ankles are disfigured by shackles. His right middle finger is missing. His shins are mutilated by burns from the fence that failed to keep him inside Camp 14.

- This is an edited extract from *Escape From Camp 14*, by Blaine Harden

18 inmates escaped from a high security prison

Featured News, National, Society | Tuesday, February 12, 2013



La Roca prison

Last night was known the escape of eighteen dangerous criminals who escaped from the prison La Roca in Guayaquil, considered as a high security jail in Ecuador. Among the inmates who have escaped were several members of the gang “Los Choneros” and also Luis Alberto Forti, also known as “Gordo Forti”, one of the country’s most wanted.

This morning it was confirmed that the 18 inmates took over the prison, after tying the jailers by hands and feet. Police retained fourteen prison guards of La Roca, to answer for this massive escape. Among those arrested is Javier Cevallos, director of the jail facility, which is administered by the Ministry of Interior.

The inmates made a hole in a wall at the jail, managing to flee to the river Daule shore, where a boat would have been expecting.

The alarm was activated at 8:00pm, just after the police realized the guards were tied up. It was initiated a combined tracking operation between elite units of the Intervention and Rescue Group (GR), Special Operations (GOE) and Armed Forces.

It was extended a security cordon surrounding all areas close to the jail, including the parishes Pascuales, La Aurora, the popular settlements of Bastion, Flor de Bastion, Paraiso de la Flor, Pancho Jacome and most counties in the province of Guayas. The escape also mobilized to bailiffs and prosecutors.

Authorities confirmed that among the escapees are members of the band “Los Choneros” and criminals that appear in the list of the most wanted Guayas and the country.

This post is also available in: Spanish

La Roca did not meet safety standards

Featured News, National | Thursday, February 14, 2013

Source:: Expreso Newspaper

The **maximum-security** prison known as **La Roca** (The Rock) was the setting for the escape of **19 extreme dangerously prisoners** last **Monday**. Investigations are carried out to determine the **main factors** for the developing of this act.

\$ 100.000



Macías Villamar José Adolfo (a) Fito
Causas: Homicidio, tenencia de armas.



Proaño Pazmiño Éder Pacífico (a) Narizón
Causas: Homicidio, tenencia de armas.



Zambrano Gonzales Jorge Luis (a) Rasquiña
Causas: Homicidio, tenencia de armas.



Vernaza Quiñónez César Demar (a) César
Causas: Homicidio, extorsión, tenencia de armas, robo.

\$ 50.000



Cabezas Arce Ives Hernán (a)
Causas: Homicidio, robo, tenencia de armas.



Vera-Mora Luis Bolívar (a) Apretadito
Causa: Asesinato.



Vásquez Ortiz Eduardo Cecilio (a) Colombia
Causas: Asesinato, robo.



Sotelo Sampedro Rodrigo Fernando (a) la Bestia
Causas: Asesinato, robo.



Castro Cabello Eddy José
Causas: Asesinato, robo.



Cuenca Chévez Orlan Roy (a) el Zera
Causas: Homicidio, tenencia de armas.



Ferrín Loor Luis Alberto
Causas: Asesinato, tenencia de armas.



Forty Aguas Alberto José (a) Gordo Alberto
Causas: Asesinato, robo, tenencia de armas.



Guaranda Cedillo Stalin Jorge (a) Garfield o Monstrito
Causas: Asesinato, robo.



Jaramillo Valencia Luis Alberto
Causas: Tenencia de armas y tráfico de estupefacientes.



León Díaz Marco Antonio (a) Tigritillo



López Muentes Maximiliano Fernando (a) Vieja Maxi



Piñeiro Gonzales Gilberto
Causas: Narcotráfico



Macías Villamar Ronald Javier (a) Javi



Mendoza López Julio David
Causa: Asesinato

2013 escape the prison director and 14 prison guards were arrested on charges they aided the convicts in their escape.

Quiñonez had formed his own gang known as “The Courageous” and most of the escapees were affiliated with the gang. Quiñonez started as a local drug trafficker for the Sinaloa cartel, which El Chapo heads, and then used his gang as enforcers for the cartel.

SHARE THIS ARTICLE



Spouses are imprisoned for having links with the mass escape from The Rock

Featured News, National, Society | Sunday, February 24, 2013

Source:: El Universo Newspaper



La Roca fugitives still at large

The involved are **Rebeca Fabiola Pilco Solis**, head of Human Resource area and her husband, the dentist **Miguel Angel Trivino Hoppe**, were accused by the prosecutors for complicity in the escape of 18 inmates from the prison known as ‘**La Roca**’.

Marco Gonzalez, Judge of the Flagrancy Unit, ordered the preventive arrest for both professionals and their immediate transfer to the prison, after being linked with the criminal proceeding brought against the director of (La Roca) and 14 guides of the penal institution. The request was made by **Jackson Lima**, the prosecutor investigating the mass escape.

During the hearing of linkage, held at 08:30 in the Judicial Unit Headquarters located in the old precinct station, which Pilco and Trivino previously attended, the official said that there is the information needed for the prosecution to solve the linking case of the pair through **Article 309 of the Penal Code** which imposes a three year imprisonment for complicity with the fugitives.

Additionally Lima said the testimonies of the three guides warn of several evidence that should be investigated to find out the degree of participation and responsibility of the spouses. He

referred to the statement of the guide **Jackson Mina Nazareno**, who said in his testimony along with that of their peers, ***“we suspect of doctor Trivino because he always talked with the PPL (detainee) who fled,”*** he said that on the day of the escape, the economist Pilco tried to enter a uniform, a belt and boots of a guide, but the police did not allow it.

Moreover the Warden **Bienvenido Garces Caicedo** said several ***“months ago there was a hunger strike in ‘La Roca’. Following investigations by Colonel Espinoza ... learned that the doctor Trivino had given the needles so they could perform the demonstrations”*** in which an inmate w alias ‘Azul’ was injured with a pair of tweezers that belonged to the dentist. Suspicions arose because Trivino always attended the same persons, the now fugitives **Cesar Vernaza, Jorge Luis Zambrano, Gilberto Pineiros, Alberto Forty Agua and Fernando Sotelo.**

The guide **Darwin Valencia Marquez** revealed that during the hunger strike, the PPL had suturing implements, the same that is in the dentistry, and Trivino always called the prisoners, adding that during the month of October he always made them enter and locked the door: ***“One day I heard a PPL tell the doctor that the deposit was already being made... and that he always saw them in secret.”***

This post is also available in: Spanish

One of the most dangerous criminals remain in La Roca

Featured News, National, Photos | Friday, February 22, 2013

Source:: La Hora Newspaper



The Police was wrong, 18 inmates escaped, not 19

After a **count of inmates** held in the **maximum-security prison** in **Guayaquil** known as **“La Roca”**, after that a **group of armed criminals** escaped easily on last **February 11**, the **Prosecutor’s Office** determined that only **18 inmates escaped** and **not 19** as previously said.

Luis Moreno, head of the **Judicial Police of Guayas**, acknowledged a **mistake** when calculating the number of prisoners who escaped.

However, the officer did **not reveal the identity** of the prisoner who was erroneously included in the list released.

According to **unofficial sources**, the inmate was Colombian **Luis Alberto Jaramillo Valencia**, who was imprisoned for **illegal possession of weapons** and **narcotics**.



Luis Jaramillo
Valencia

Luis Jaramillo Valencia

It should be noted that the **negligence level** of the Police force is very high, so much that they cannot even make a proper count after a **jailbreak, 11 days after the event**, and in the meanwhile the **18** most dangerous fugitives in the country **continue to enjoy their self-granted freedom**.

Los 18 fugados de la Roca

De nacionalidad colombiana



Ronald Macías Villamar
(a) Javi



Julio Mendoza López



Gilberto Piñeiro Gonzales



José Macías Villamar
(a) Fito



Rodrigo Sotelo Sampedro
(a) La bestia



Eduardo Vásquez Ortiz
(a) Colombia



Luis Vera Mora
(a) Apretadito



César Vernaza Quiñónez
(a) César



Jorge Luis Zambrano Gonzales



Ives Hernán Cabeza Arce



Eddy Castro Cabello



Orlan Cuenca Chévez
(a) El Zena



Luis Alberto Ferrín Loo



Alberto Forty Aguas
(a) Gordo Alberto



Stalin Guaranda Cedillo
(a) Garfield



Éder Proaño Pazmiño
(a) Narizón



Marco Antonio León Díaz
(a) Tigrillo



Maximiliano López Muentes
(a) Vieja Maxi

The 18 most wanted fugitives

El Chapo's' top enforcer in Ecuador escapes from prison

César Demar Vernaza Quiñónez is among 18 fugitives sought by authorities.

By Hólger Álava for Infosurhoy.com – 28/02/2013



César Demar Vernaza Quiñónez, the Sinaloa Cartel's top enforcer in Ecuador, and 17 other inmates escaped from an Ecuadoran prison on Feb. 11. (Courtesy of Ecuadoran National Police)

GUAYAQUIL, Ecuador – Authorities continue to search for drug lord Joaquín “El Chapo” Guzmán's top enforcer in Ecuador and 12 other inmates who escaped from the La Roca Detention Center earlier this month after five were captured in the past few days.

César Demar Vernaza Quiñónez, who was serving 25 years for murder, and numerous members of his ruthless gang “The Courageous” were among the group of inmates who fled the high-security prison on Feb. 11.

But the inmates may have received help, as 14 prison officers, including Javier Cevallos, the detention center's director, were arrested the next day by federal law enforcement agents on charges they allegedly aided the escape.

The inmates used two handguns to overpower prison guards, forcing them to remove their uniforms before tying them up. The prisoners blasted a hole in the wall, enabling them to reach a boat that was waiting for them on the Daule River behind the prison, authorities said.

“The prison break was well planned, and it would have been impossible for it to happen without help from outside and without the possible help of officers (such as) the guards and the director of the detention center,” said Ricardo Camacho Zeas, a security analyst in Ecuador. “Almost everything was malfunctioning at La Roca on that day – the video cameras, the lights. Who was in charge of the detention center?”

About 30 minutes later, prison officials learned of the escape. They launched a massive manhunt for the fugitives, starting with police and military troops searching the areas surrounding the prison, most of the villages in the province of Guayas and along the banks of the Daule River. They also searched the scrubland near the prison and checked dozens of residences but did not find the fugitives, as several residents said more than a dozen men had left the area in four vehicles, according to the Ecuadoran daily *La Hora*.

The Ecuadoran government is offering a reward of US\$100,000 for information leading to the capture of Vernaza Quiñónez, who was initially taken into custody along with 14 of his gang members by the National Police in April 2012. The government has offered rewards totaling US\$1.2 million for information leading the arrests of all the fugitives.

Fugitives Orland Chávez Roy Cuenca, Luis Bolívar Vera Mora and Maximiliano Fernando López Muentes were captured by authorities in a house in the province of Santa Elena on Feb. 27. A day earlier, Luis Alberto Ferrín Loor and Éder Pacífico Proaño Pazmiño were arrested at a residence northwest of Guayaquil, according to Interior Minister José Serrano. Ferrín Loor and Proaño Pazmiño were serving 25-year prison sentences for the murder of Jairo Carreño Mendoza in 2011.

But before he was locked behind bars, Vernaza Quiñónez and his gang allegedly transported narcotics shipments for Guzmán, who heads Mexico's Sinaloa cartel and is the country's most wanted fugitive after escaping from a Mexican prison in 2001, according to federal law enforcement authorities in Ecuador.

In December 2012, *Semana*, a Colombian magazine, published an article, "The Sinaloa Cartel Rules in Ecuador." The article detailed how Guzmán's forces operate in Ecuador, with the help of Vernaza Quiñónez's gang.

Transnational criminal organizations operate throughout Latin America, smuggling narcotics north toward the Mexican-U.S. border and Canada and also to Europe and Australia, said security analyst Edgardo Buscaglia, the president of the Institute for Justice and Democracy (IAC) in Mexico City.

"The Sinaloa Cartel is present in many countries and Ecuador is certainly one of them," Camacho Zeas said.

The Sinaloa Cartel has increased its operations in Ecuador in recent years, as the transnational criminal organization smuggles drugs out of Ecuador primarily by air and sea, he added.

In recent months, Ecuadoran authorities have made numerous seizures and arrests connected to the Sinaloa cartel's operations in the Andean nation:

- In June 2012, the Ecuadoran Navy seized a submarine under construction in a small island close to Isla Puna, in the gulf of Guayaquil. The submarine was similar to the one spotted and sunk by a Navy helicopter in January 2012. The seized submarine probably belonged to El Chapo, security analysts said.
- In May 2012, a small plane crashed in the province of Manabí, a region known as Cerro de la Muerte. Ecuadoran police found US\$1.4 million in cash on the airplane, which had Mexican tags. The pilot and co-pilot, who both died, were from Sinaloa, Mexico, the cartel's stronghold. The two men were identified as Santiago Alfonso López Monzón, 32, and Cruz Alfredo Solís López, 46.
- In April 2012, Ecuadoran police forces took Vernaza Quiñónez and 14 members of his gang into custody. In August of that year, the First Criminal Court of Esmeraldas sentenced him to 25 years in prison for two murders. He's also a key person of interest in the killing of Wellington Alcívar Quiñónez, an attorney in Esmeraldas who was fatally shot in February 2012 after publicly denouncing the Sinaloa Cartel's activities in Ecuador.

- **Uncertainty in responsibility for the leak of criminals**

- Featured News, National | Wednesday, February 13, 2013

Source:: El Comercio Newspaper; Expreso Newspaper

- After that **19 inmates** escaped the **Rehabilitation Center for Boys No. 2**, aka “*The Rock*“, on **Monday**, there is **uncertainty** on who might be **responsible** for such an act.



- - “*La Roca*” prison next to the Daule River.
- With so much doubt, the judge **Cristian Jurado** made a **hearing of charges** against the **14 guards** who allegedly were threatened with **firearms** and **machetes**, before being **locked up** and **handcuffed** behind **visit cell bars**.
- The 14 prison guards will be investigated for possible involvement in the escape of the 19 “*extremely dangerous*” prisoners. Jurado ordered a **remand** until they obtain **specific findings** of the act.
- **Javier Cevallos Gonzalez**, director of the maximum security prison, was also dictated **custody** for the crime of **omission** (neglect of an individual on the responsibility of an act), and was **issued a capture warrant**.
- It is also known that **six other guides** did not go to work the day of the escape, so they will **also be investigated**.
- The provincial prosecutor **Paul Ponce Quiroz** said there are indications that the escape was **planned** and **assisted** since they “*have escaped from the back of the detention center. This suggests that there was outside help. They have reached the Daule River, where they took a boat, went across the river and escaped with various*”

forms, including vehicles that, according to my understanding, must have been waiting for them," he said.



- The raids in and out of La Roca began almost two hours after the escape of the prisoners.
- **Guides identified:**
- Bertalí Bienvenido Garcés Caicedo, Darwin Enrique Valencia Márquez, Edwin Orlando Campos Viracocha, Jorge Iván Recalde Aguirre, Marco Vinicio Arroyo Alomoto, Gonzalo José Cortez Cheme, Darwin Fabricio Montaña Quiñónez, Marcos Rubén Mena Alvarado, Carlos Andrés Yépez Cobo, Wellington David Castellano Acosta, Alejandra Valeria Aguaguiña Alabuella, Jackson Jefferson Mina Nazareno, Flavio Ricardo Sevillano Ulloa, Carlos Javier Zurita Morales.
- This post is also available in: Spanish

There is a \$1.2 million rewards for information leading to the arrest of the convicts.

Published in *Latino Daily News*

Convicts of 'La Roca' had access to communication systems

Featured News, Local Politics, National | Tuesday, February 26, 2013

Source:: Ecuavisa



La Roca inmates could make calls

The now fugitives of the prison '**La Roca**' could make national and international phone calls through a communication system that had been installed, which obviously is prohibited.

This new evidence explains how the escape convicts coordinated their escape. The **National Police** dismantled the network, however it mocked the expensive antennas of inhibitory signals located in the Coastal penitentiary and the maximum-security prison.

Investigations revealed that the system operated with homemade antennas, located around the prison. The antenna receives the signal at a wireless telephone base, which is connected to a modem chip, in a conventional system, not celular. Subsequently the headphones were entered into the prison so inmates could make calls, explained Colonel **Wladimir Leon**, the operating chief that disarmed this network.

Additionally, it was found that the defendants paid from 600 to 700 dollars a month to maintain the underground system, said Leon. So far three persons were arrested, the ones who were in charge of taking care of the antennas inside a house. The penalty for commercializing telecommunications services, without being legally entitled, is up to five years in prison.

This post is also available in: Spanish

The Negligence made "La Roca" unsafe

Featured News, National | Friday, February 22, 2013

Source:: Hoy Newspaper

According to a report by the **Criminologist Police Department of Guayas**, the **maximum-security** prison in **Guayaquil**, known as "*La Roca*" (The Rock), where **18 inmates** escaped last **February 11**, had **malfunctions** and **administrative glitches**.



Destroyed walls of "La Roca"

Among them, the prison (run by the Government), had **security flaws**, specifically **damage** in the **surveillance cameras**, in the **metal detector** and in the **X-ray detector**

This, according to police, could have opened the **possibility** of entering **weapons** and **ammunition** inside the prison.

The report also reveals that the day of the escape, **several cameras** were **turned off** as well as the **monitoring TV**; **collapsed wires**, 7 of the **11 interior lights** were off, and on the **external security**, **234 meters** with **electric fencing mesh** that does not work either.

According to the report, all these flaws were informed to the prison director **Javier Cevallos Gonzalez**, who is currently in **custody** along with the **14 prison guards** who were on the day of the flight. It was such the **level of negligence** in the administration of La Roca, that the **most dangerous** and **most wanted criminals** in the country, took **two hours** to escape without anyone noticing, with the aggravating circumstance that they even took the time to say **goodbye leaving messages** written on the walls.



“Bye, we’re off Mustache” is what the criminals wrote before leaving. It refers to the prominent mustache of the mayor of Guayaquil who, along with the municipality, built the Prison, but left the management to the Government of Correa.

This post is also available in: Spanish

Escape from Abu Salim Prison

One year ago today I escaped from Abu Salim prison in Libya. I had spent half a year being psychologically tortured in solitary confinement, pacing in my cell, staring at the walls and fearing that this would be all I would know for the rest of my life.



On the 165th day of this unimaginable hell, prisoners came to my cell and broke off the lock. I escaped Abu Salim with other prisoners of war and we ran for our lives.

That night I was watching the story of my escape on CNN.

The world thought I was dead for most of the time I was in Abu Salim prison – I was missing in action. Despite the widespread belief that I was buried in the desert, Human Rights Watch (HRW) advocated for my release and the international press covered the story. Only in the last two weeks before my escape did the Gaddafi regime even admit that I was alive and in custody, but they still would not let anyone see me or check on my condition.

HRW went to Abu Salim a few weeks before the prison break and was told I wasn't there. I was there, and I was being held in solitary confinement under deplorable conditions. The Gaddafi regime did not care what the US government, NGOs, or the international press had to say. I would still be in that cell, if not executed, if we hadn't won the war.

I had come to help the Libyan rebels, and then the Libyan rebels came to help me. My fellow rebel prisoners broke me out of the cell and we escaped together. There was no outside intervention to save me from the horrors of Abu Salim.

A few days after my escape, I was at the Corinthia Hotel as a guest of the rebel government and I came under intense pressure, especially from HRW, to leave Libya. The international press started calling my mother telling her to convince me to leave as well. The press was confused about why I was still in Tripoli days after escaping from Abu Salim prison, as if I was waiting for something.

I was waiting for something – for Nouri. Nouri Fonas was my friend of four years with whom I had been serving in the rebel forces before I was captured. Transportation was difficult and it took Nouri a few days to arrive from Benghazi. Soon after he arrived, we left Tripoli together.

The press and HRW had no idea where I went. They assumed I had conceded to their demands and gone home.

Instead, Nouri and I spent one night in Benghazi, paid a visit to the Ministry of Defence, and then headed back to the front line. We joined the Ali Hassan al-Jaber brigade, were assigned a military jeep that we fitted with a DShK heavy machine gun, and returned to the war.



Just as when I first joined the revolution in March 2011, nobody was supposed to know about my return to the front lines. My participation in Libya's revolution was supposed to be a secret, a personal matter, but being captured and imprisoned in Abu Salim erased my anonymity. I tried once again to stay below the radar when returning to the front lines after prison until a photographer spotted me as I passed through a checkpoint in the jeep. The secret was out.

It was for the best, it turned out. Occasionally, I was able to take the press with me in the jeep to the front lines so they could report on the war while I fought in it, giving them a safe escort in an otherwise uncertain conflict zone. And thanks to our commander giving Nouri and I a lot of freedom to move as we wanted and fight where we wanted, we had a rare grasp of what was happening on the various front lines in Sirte. We fought at many different areas on the front lines alongside various other brigades, making us a reliable source of information for the media.

Nevertheless, I was criticized after the war by men incapable of understanding why someone who endured nearly six months of hell in the notorious Abu Salim prison would return to combat after escaping. To this day some of these individuals, from the comfort of their homes in

Europe and the United States, have tried to disparage me for keeping the commitment I made to Libya the day I first put on a uniform in March 2011.

Their criticism speaks volumes about their character, not mine. I told the rebels when I joined them in March 2011 that I would not leave Libya until the country was free. I honor my word; that is how I was raised. I would also not leave Libya before the men I was captured with were accounted for – they could have been in prison in Sirte or another Gaddafi-held city. Why would I ever abandon them? Furthermore, how could I leave Libya when there were *any* prisoners of war still being held by the regime?

These wars of liberation aren't a game and there aren't any timeouts. The war in Libya, and the war now raging in Syria, are all-or-nothing pursuits. As Omar Mukhtar said, "We will not surrender. We win or we die." As I write this, there are thousands of prisoners waiting in their cells in Syria, just as I was waiting in a Libyan prison last year.

No amount of reporting, NGO press releases, or rhetoric will get them out – Bashar al-Assad doesn't care what anyone says, just like Gaddafi didn't care what any of them said about me.

This isn't the time for observation. This isn't the time for politely discussing the situation at the UN, or standing at podiums issuing idle threats about what might happen if lines that we keep moving are somehow crossed. We are way past going through the motions of diplomacy.

Those thousands of Syrian prisoners – men, women, and children- are waiting for us. Each day they stare at the walls and wonder if it will be their last. I know the feeling, and I'll do whatever I can to help them escape from *their* Abu Salim.

And I'm starting with this film.

Gaddafi's Prisoner – Reflections on My Time as a POW in the Libyan Civil War

Gaddafi's Prisoner – Reflections on My Time as a POW in the Libyan Civil War

(also available in French [here](#))



Freedom fighter and prisoner of war Matthew VanDyke in his cell at Maktab al-Nasser prison in Tripoli, Libya

One year ago today on March 13, 2011 I was captured by Gaddafi's forces during a reconnaissance mission in Brega, Libya. I was struck in the head and woke up in a prison cell to the sounds of a man being tortured in the room above me.

I was psychologically tortured in solitary confinement for 165 days in two of Libya's most notorious prisons, Maktab al-Nasser and Abu Salim.

Staring at the wall in silence for 5 1/2 months gave me a lot of time for reflection. These are some of the thoughts that went through my mind:

My life is over. I have thrown it all away.

I will never see my mother again. I am an only child and she has no other family. I have selfishly left her all alone. She will never be able to move on and will spend the rest of her life trying to get me freed. If they ever release me I will be 50 or 60 years old and just starting my life when others are retiring. Hopefully I will still have at least a couple of years left with my mother.

I will never see my girlfriend again. Six years of true love that most people only know of through books and movies. If I do get to see her again it will be in 30 years. I will meet her husband and her children, and wish they were my children, and think of what could have been.

Gaddafi's regime believes I am a spy. They will torture me. They will rip out my fingernails one by one until I confess.

And then they will execute me. Perhaps in public. Maybe Gaddafi himself will preside over the execution, as they hang me by the neck in Green Square. That would not be the worse that could happen. At least a public execution would limit my suffering to a few moments before it all goes dark. A secret execution might be slow and painful. Or angry guards might break into my cell, stack tires up to my neck, douse me with gasoline and light me on fire.

Maybe I am better off dead, so that my mother and girlfriend can have some closure.

Maybe I should take my own life.

I hope that the men I was captured with are ok. Are they still alive or were they executed? How did I get this wound on the left side of my head and why can't I remember what happened?

I know nothing except the confines of my cell. And it is likely that this cell is all I will know for the rest of my life.

Is it wrong to fight for freedom? Is freedom worth fighting, killing, dying for? Have I committed a sin and is God punishing me for it? Or has God saved me from committing sin by taking away my mortal life to save my immortal soul?

Was the freedom of others worth this sacrifice, worth spending the rest of my life in solitary confinement staring at gray walls and thinking of what my life could have been like if I hadn't gotten on that plane and gone to Libya?

These are a fraction of the thoughts that ran through my head for 5 1/2 months. 165 days. Nearly 4,000 hours. Sitting in a wretched Libyan prison, staring at scratches on the wall marking the days of the prisoners before me and watching in horror as my own scratches became double and triple the number of theirs.

My story is only unique because I am an American freedom fighter, an American prisoner of war in the Arab Spring. As you read this there are thousands of others in prisons who are tortured by the same thoughts, the same questions, the same doubts. Some of them have been in prison for many years; others were imprisoned for protesting in the street or fighting for freedom on the battlefield in countries like Syria. Many others suffer in these dungeons merely for something they wrote or an off-hand remark they made that was overheard by a regime informer.

I was fortunate. On August 24, 2011 escaping prisoners came to my cell, broke the lock, opened the door, and took me with them as we ran for our lives. It is time that we begin doing the same for the hundreds of thousands of political prisoners and freedom fighters around the world who have sacrificed their personal liberty in the pursuit of liberty for all.

In the words of George Orwell:

<http://www.nbcnews.com/video/nightly-news/44292441#44292441>

Exposed: the 'Abu Salim prison massacre' fraud

26 September 2011, 8,867 views, 13 Comments



by [Martin Iqbal](#).

Updated 27 September, 2011 – see section: 'The meals'.

Updated again 28 September, 2011. Click here to go to this update.

To date Libya has been subjected to decades of foreign meddling and attempts to assassinate and oust its leader Muammar Gaddafi. Throughout this time, foreign-based Libyan opposition groups and globalist propaganda mills have incessantly cited supposed atrocities committed by Gaddafi, and none is more infamous or overused than the 'Abu Salim prison massacre' of June, 1996. This is now being invoked yet again in an attempt to justify the brutal war being waged on the people of Libya.

The events of the 'Abu Salim prison massacre' are based on two reports – one from the New York based, globalist-funded Human Rights Watch, and one from the CIA-Mossad-created National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL). The backgrounds of these organisations lend them zero credibility and in addition, their reports are based on nothing more than the testimony of two people – one named and one anonymous. Openly admitted by Human Rights Watch, none of the claims made by their witness can be independently verified. On top of this, their witness states on record that he did not witness even one single prisoner being shot dead in this supposed massacre. Furthermore, as I will demonstrate, the reports are riddled with contradictions and weaknesses. All in all, these factors and the historical context that surrounds them, utterly expose the contrived nature of the 'Abu Salim massacre' story.

The story begins in Abu Salim prison complex, Tripoli, in June, 1996. After several successful and unsuccessful escape attempts mounted by prisoners in Abu Salim over the previous years, security was increased at the complex and living conditions worsened for the inmates.

According to the NFSL report, at "4:30 PM on Friday June 29th 1996" (June 29th, 1996, was actually a Saturday) a prison guard named Omar Fathallah, entered a cell in order to bring food to the prisoners. Inmates had been waiting behind the door, and as Fathallah entered he was knocked unconscious by prisoners who then attempted to escape. The inmates began moving out to the courtyard of the prison, breaking the locks of other prisoners' cells as they went:

"The prisoners continued to chase the guards out of the building and to break the locks on other cells freeing other prisoners."

And herein lays the first, albeit relatively insignificant, contradiction. Human Rights Watch's witness, Hussein al-Shafa'i, offered conflicting testimony – he claimed that this incident occurred on June 28th as opposed to June 29th, 1996:

"According to al-Shafa'i, the incident began around 4:40 p.m. on June 28, when prisoners in Block 4 seized a guard named Omar who was bringing their food. Hundreds of prisoners from blocks 3, 5 and 6 escaped their cells."

As the guards were chased out of the cell blocks, one guard was left laying injured on the ground in the courtyard, whilst another was hoisted up to safety by other guards standing on the roof. The NFSL's report here mentions that guards began firing on the inmates in the courtyard, killing 6 and injuring 11. HRW however, only mentions one death at this time – that of Mahmoud al-Mesiri. "There were 16 or 17 injured by bullets", HRW's witness tells us, "the first to die was Mahmoud al-Mesiri. The prisoners took two guards hostage."

With one guard laying injured on the ground in the courtyard, and Omar Fathallah having been killed by the prisoners, a negotiating team arrived at the prison to discuss the prisoners' demands. Crucially the NFSL report **does not mention the fact that Omar Fathallah was killed by the prisoners**; only the HRW report does. In this deliberate omission, the NFSL report fails to even mention the fact that Fathallah died at all.

With the negotiating team having arrived at Abu Salim, the prisoners were told to designate representatives from each block. A condition of the negotiations was that the two hostages would have to be released by the prisoners. The injured guard held hostage in the courtyard was released, but Omar Fathallah had already been killed. The prisoners presented their demands to the negotiators after agreeing to return to their cells.

The ‘executed bus prisoners’

It was then that the NFSL report tells of some prisoners being herded onto buses:

“All those in need of medical attention were told to board buses that would take them to hospitals. About 120 people boarded the buses. Those who were accused of belonging to opposition groups were ordered to get off the buses. All others were taken outside the prison section to a different part of the compound.”

The report then claims that some of these inmates, but it does not state how many, were executed by Libyan army conscripts who were given ‘kill or be killed’ orders. There is no evidence for this claim, but the NFSL report cites an anonymous ‘prison guard’ who supposedly escaped and told his story:

“They were lined up and shot execution style by young conscripts whose choices were shoot, or stand with them to be shot. This was later reported by an officer, who defied orders that night and was able to escape.”

Referring to the ‘bus executions’, HRW’s report cites the NFSL report and claims that “*many of them were executed*“, but offers no numbers or details.

Conflicting timelines: when did the ensuing ‘massacre’ actually occur?

The NFSL report then speaks of how, in the evening of ‘Friday June 29th’ (again, June 29th, 1996, was actually a Saturday), prisoners were herded into the courtyard of the prison and then the ‘massacre’ began at 11:00pm that night.

However, HRW’s report states that Omar Fathallah was knocked unconscious and the violence erupted at 04:40pm, June 28th. Their witness then claims that the ‘herding’ happened at 05:00am on June 29th, and the ‘massacre’ then began at 11:00am that morning.

According to the NFSL, the ‘massacre’ began at 11:00pm on June 29 when hand grenades were thrown into the courtyard and firing began. HRW’s different timeline tells of how the ‘massacre’ continued from 11:00am until 01:35pm on June 29th. Then, apparently, guards began ‘finishing off’ prisoners with pistols at 02:00pm.

Al-Shafa’i did not see a single prisoner shot dead

Crucially, and this must be stressed emphatically, HRW’s lone witness, Hussein al-Shafa’i, did not see a single prisoner being shot during the supposed massacre. Conveniently however, he was able to see the green bandanas worn by the men doing the shooting from the roof:

“I could not see the dead prisoners who were shot, but I could see those who were shooting. They were a special unit and wearing khaki military hats. Six were using kalashnikovs. I saw them – at least six men – on the roofs of the cellblocks. They were wearing beige khaki uniforms with green bandanas, a turban-like thing. Around 2:00 p.m. the forces used pistols to “finish off those who were not dead,” he said.”

The meals

Not having actually witnessed a single prisoner being shot in the ‘massacre’, star witness al-Shafa’i provides HRW with an estimate of how many were allegedly killed “**by counting the number of meals he prepared prior to and after the incident**“. There are a number of problems with using this as a basis for calculating how many were killed. First and foremost, it would only constitute an indirect estimate, in the absence of any evidence of bodies or the witnessing of the alleged killings.

Secondly, al-Shafa’i does not state the time period over which he counted the meals. Was it *only* the next day, or was it every day for the next month? There are a whole host of reasons why less meals may have been prepared after the incident. Perhaps prison logistics were thrown into chaos by the escape attempt and the killings of guards and prisoners, and as a result some meals were skipped.

Perhaps prison authorities decided to punish the prisoners for the violent escape attempt, and skipped meals (cruel as this may be).

More importantly however, are we supposed to believe that **one man** was responsible for preparing meals for a prison population of **between 1,600 and 1,700 inmates**? If one meal were to take just one minute to prepare, this would take al-Shafa’i 1,600 minutes – **which is 26.6 hours**. It would be literally impossible for one man to do this every day. At the same time, the only way a reliable estimate could be reached, would be if this one man **did** prepare all the meals himself (impossible), unless he had knowledge of how many were being prepared by other kitchen workers.

Realistically for a prison population of 1,600-1,700, the only way to feed all inmates every day would be to have a number of kitchen workers, so let’s follow this line of inquiry.

Let’s say there were a number of prisoners preparing meals every day – 35 prisoners preparing 50 meals per day, each – that is realistic. This would amount to 1,750 (the approximate total capacity of the prison).

Let’s then say that after the ‘massacre’, al-Shafa’i perhaps was preparing 15 meals instead of 50. If he were to extrapolate this number out over the other prisoners that were preparing meals, we would arrive at an estimate of 1,225 less meals.

However, this method of estimation would **only be accurate if al-Shafa’i had knowledge that the other kitchen workers were preparing the same number of meals as him. He did not have this knowledge, because he estimated based on the number that HE was preparing.**

This is a typical tactic to manipulate the numbers in order to give the story a credible estimate, in the absence of any actual evidence.

Moreover, al-Shafa’i claims that he was “*asked by the prison guards to wash the watches that were taken from the bodies of the dead prisoners and were covered in blood*“. Why did he not count the watches? This is not discussed in the HRW report.

This highly questionable 'star' witness who admits to not even having seen anybody get shot, then goes on to state that the dead inmates' bodies were put into trenches and concrete was poured on. Subsequently, the bodies were moved, he tells us:

"They threw the bodies into trenches – 2 to 3 meters deep, one meter wide and about 100 meters long – that had been dug for a new wall ... In 1999 security officials poured cement over the trench, he claimed, although he believed that they later had the bodies removed."

The idea that the bodies were moved is a convenient excuse for the 1,200 bodies not being found at Abu Salim – an eventuality that seems inevitable considering the laughably shaky nature of the whole story. The unelected lackeys and terrorists of the NTC are already trying to rekindle this fable with the help of the media.

Conclusion: 1996 and the wider context

It is eminently clear that the 'Abu Salim massacre' was nothing of the sort. Even the NFSL admits that what transpired was a violent escape attempt as it mentions guards being attacked and cell locks being broken. As a result of this a guard was killed, one was taken hostage, and a number of prisoners were killed as prison guards reacted to quell the violence. This is corroborated in HRW's own report where it quotes 'Khaled', the head of the Libyan Internal Security Agency:

"Prisoners had captured some guards during a meal and taken weapons from the prison cache. Prisoners and guards died as security personnel tried to restore order,"

The charge that 1,200 were killed is supported by no physical evidence whatsoever, and on top of this, the single named witness on which the story hinges, did not even see a single shooting. Furthermore, as demonstrated, the testimonies of both witnesses are simply not credible and conflict with each other.

For wider context we must consider an important factor. 1996 was a time when MI6 was mounting attempts to assassinate Muammar Gaddafi using 'al Qaeda' extremists to whom they paid a large sum of money. Abu Salim prison – and this is openly stated by the NFSL's report – was used to house "*members of a group from the city of Derna*". Derna is the very city mentioned in the infamous West Point report which found it to be a hotbed for extremist 'al Qaeda' fighters. These extremists had fought in Iraq and Afghanistan against the occupying forces. Furthermore, these very groups are now being supported by NATO in Libya in its attempt to oust Gaddafi – as they have been for at least the last three decades as indicated by Newsweek in 1981.

In fact, the HRW report cites the head of the Libyan Internal Security Agency as follows:

"According to Khaled, more than 400 prisoners escaped Abu Salim in four separate break-outs prior to and after the incident: in July 1995, December 1995, June 1996 and July 2001. Among the escapees were men who then fought with Islamist militant groups in Afghanistan, Iran, and Iraq, he said."

It is not just probable but highly likely, that the violent break-out mounted at Abu Salim in June 1996 (which was partially successful) was related to the ongoing MI6 attempts to kill Gaddafi using the very groups that were being held in that prison. Ever since that time, foreign-backed

Libyan opposition groups such as the NFSL, and globalist propaganda mills such as Human Rights Watch, have distorted and manipulated the truth about 'Abu Salim', in an attempt to both rally the extremist fighters opposed to Gaddafi, and justify the brutal, illegal war of aggression now being waged on Libya.

Update: 28 September, 2011

The following December 2009 report from Human Rights watch contains a very interesting piece of information that delivers the final nail in the coffin of the 'Abu Salim massacre' fabrication. The report attempts to back up the 1,200 estimate by claiming that the number was confirmed by the Libyan government:

The number was also confirmed by the Libyan Secretary of Justice to Human Rights Watch in April 2009.

This can be seen on page 50 of the report, and the source for the claim is cited as:

*Human Rights Watch interview with Counselor **Mostafa Abdeljalil**, Secretary of Justice, Tripoli, April 26, 2009*

For those that don't know, Mostafa Abdeljalil is the Chairman of the NTC – nothing more than a lackey and a puppet of NATO and the powers now waging war on Libya. In case you forgot his face, he is pictured below.





13 Comments »

- ***Libya: NTC concocts mass grave story in brazen propaganda ploy | empirestrikesblack said:***

[...] Tripoli's Abu Salim prison complex. The BBC attempts to tie this 'finding' to the equally concocted 'Abu Salim prison massacre', as it claims that the bodies are those of the inmates supposedly killed in [...]

27 September 2011 at 17:09

- ***Caustic Logic said:***

Excellent article, Martin. Thanks for putting it together.

I'd like to mention another possibility for the lunch tray change (if it even happened) – what if app. 1,200 prisoners were *transferred* after the incident? Too many Islamist heads kept together managed to hatch their June 28 plot, so maybe they decided it was better to split them up to different prisons than keep them concentrated. This, like death, would cause missing lunches for an extended period. Either way, even if his count is true, as you say it's not the best method for determining that people were murdered, and it's alarming that was the initial evidence.

I'm curious about his angle of view-how realistic is it to have seen the shooters on the roof but not their prey? Does he give a detailed description of where he was at the time and why?

And another point that just arose-at my blog post, Felix has comments conveying later info, whereby the government seems to have conceded to over 1,100 killings – sort of. It seems on the surface like confirmation, but then again, they also *seem* to have admitted to Lockerbie, right?

28 September 2011 at 09:43

- ***Libyan's Chronicles 13.0.4 « GilGuySparks said:***

[...] vedi il fondamentale articolo: <http://empirestrikesblack.com/2011/09/exposed-the-abu-salim-prison-massacre-fraud/> [...]

28 September 2011 at 14:00

- ***wage said:***

you three person ur hands cannpt raise anymore cause ur the loser in war of libya

29 September 2011 at 15:40

- ***Libyan National Transitional Council concocts mass grave story in brazen propaganda ploy. « The Truth is Where? said:***

[...] found in Tripoli's Abu Salim prison complex. The BBC attempts to tie this 'finding' to the equally concocted 'Abu Salim prison massacre', as it claims that the bodies are those of the inmates supposedly killed in [...]

6 October 2011 at 08:36

- ***Mannie said:***

I have no position and I thank you for presenting a different take on events than I've read before. But I have to say something about a part of your piece that I thought was unnecessary and detracted from your argument. And that's your meal preparation analysis. You question if one man could prepare 1750 meals but if he's comparing before and after then his claim of counting the meals he prepares relates to the preparation of 525 meals, not 1750. He could've based the previous count of meals on the capacity figures which you yourself cite as the basis of your mathematical argument.

Now if, as you say, it could take a man a minimum one minute to prepare a meal that's just over eight hours. Also I think we're talking just rice and something else here, so you could get that timing down to 30 seconds, less even. (From memory at Burger King you're expected to make a Whopper in less than 40 seconds.) But let's put that aside. It's a silly argument. Thankfully we're not privy to the machinations of that kitchen, but it's rare to have more than one preparing preparing more than a single item in an industrial-size kitchen. The witness could've counted how many slops from a pot he made. The details provided by the witness of the guns and the uniforms of the guards compared to how light his testimony in relation to the killings is your best argument. I thank you for

your piece but I sincerely suggest you tweak the meals section at very least because up until that point I was starting to really hear you.

25 October 2011 at 11:22

- **sbs100** said:

If you read up on other claimed atrocities, for instance, the farm warehouse massacre during regime change in Libya – the witness testimony bears a lot of similarity.

You've only to look at the claims of mass graves in Iraq given by opposition groups which HRW were happy to repeat. No evidence of these mass graves have been found to date.

14 November 2011 at 18:18

- **shirley** said:

THE SO CALLED AL QEIDA YOU TALK ABOUT IS RUBBISH AL QEIDA WAS NOT FORMED UNTIL 1988 ACORDING TO OTHER US GOV AND MANY INDEPENDANT SOURCES MANY NATIONLIST GROUPS HAVE BEEN PUT UNDER THE ALQEIDA BANNER THE ALGERIAN GROUP WHICH ALSO FOUGHT IN AFGHANISTAN AND PROBABLY KOSOVO DECIDED ONLY 5 YRS AGO TO COME UNDER THE ALQEIDABANNER THERE WAS NO ALQEIDA IN IRAQ NON OF THESE GROUPS ARE CORE ALQEIDA ONLY ONE CORE ALQEIDA FIGHTER WAS EVER CAUGHT IN IRAQ EARLY ON THE ALQEIDA IN IRAQ WERE SIMPLY RESISTENCE FIGHTERS THAT USED THE NAME AND WERE EVEN CALLED BY US ALQEIDA IN IRAQ NOT CORE ALQEIDA YOU CANNOT BELIEVE WHAT US SAY US BECAUSE THEY HAVE DECIDED TO PUT ALL GROUPS UNDER THE ALQEIDA BANNER AND EVEN IF PEOPLE FOUGHT IN AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ UNDER ALQEIDA BANNER SO WHAT BOTH COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN INVADED UNDER PACK OF LIES TALIBAN NOTHING TO DO WITH 9/11 US DID NOT NEED TO CARPET BOMB AFGHANISTAN BUT COVERT OPERATION TO CATCH O B LADEN ETC THERE WAS NO ALQEIDA IN IRAQ AS US STATED AS ONE REASON BESIDES WMD TO ATTACK IRAQ SAYING SADDAM SUPPORTED ALQEIDA BASES IN FACT IRAQ WAS INVADED TO SET UP SHAM PRO US ISREAL GOV THERE US WANTS TO CLUMP EVERYONE UNDER THE ALQEIDA BANNER AND AS YOU KNOW THE CURRENT AL QEIDA FIGHTER IS A TRAITOR BUT IN REALITY HAD VERY LITTLE TO DO WITH CORE ALQEIDA WHICH IS AN EXTREMELY SMALL GROUP HE WAS PART OF NATIONLIST MOVEMENT IN LIBYA IN 1990s AND HAS BETRAYED ALQEIDA WHICH WOULD NEVER HELP US DESTROY AND CONTROL AN ARAB COUNTRY THIS MAN IS JUST A GADDFHI HATER AND HAS LUMPED TOGETHER A RABBLE FOLLOWING tHINK WHILE THE STRONG ALGERIAN GROUP WHO HAVE OPENLY JOINED ALQEIDA HAVE NOT USED LIBYA COLLAPSE TO START ALGERIA TROUBLE BECAUSE THEY DO NOT SUPPORT THIS TRAITOR IN LIBYA USING ALQEIDA AS A COVER THE US OVER THE YRS HAS GREATLY EXPANDED THE ALQEIDA GROUP MANY IN GTMO TESTIMENT TO HOW US TRIED TO ATTACH THEM TO ALQEIDA IT IS IN US INTERESTS TO EXPAND ALQEIDA THE TRUTH LONG BURIED AS TO HOW SMALL CORE 9/11 AL QEIDA REALLY IS IT THE US THAT HAS MADE ALQEIDA LLARGE BY DISTORTING FACTS AND REWRITING THINGS NOT THE CORE ALQEIDA GROUP ITSELF HAVE BEEN FOLOWINF ME MANY YRS NOW ALSO ISREAL ENGAGED IN

DEMANIZING AND SUDAN AND ARMING SOUTH SUDAN REBELS ISREAL AND ITS AFFILIATES HAVE BEEN DESTABILIZING AND DEMANIZING ARABS FOR DECADES ONE ISREALS GREATEST PROPAGANDA ISREAL THE ONLY DEMOCRACY IN ME IN 1950s ISREAL AGENTS ATTACKED WESTERN INTERSTS IN EGYPT AND BLAMED IT ON EGYPT GROUPS AND CAUSING TROUBLE FOR EGYPT it ALSO CAUSED EGYPT TO EXPEL JEWS WHICH ISREAL WANTED TO POPULATE ISREAL . ISREAL AND ITS TENTICLE ARMS HAS LONG DESTABILIZED ME LONG BEFORE ALQEIDA WAS EVEN THOUGHT OF

15 November 2011 at 21:56

- **KALI YUGA REPORT 111221 | Montgomery County on the Mary-land Republic said:**

[...] Al Arabiyah has this on the good doctor's reaction to the alleged discovery of the mass grave for the Abu Salim Prison probably fictitious massacre: [...]

22 December 2011 at 14:52

- ***nadia mohammed* said:**

In my possession, along with many other families, is a paper we recieved from the Gadaffi regime in 2008. It apologises for the unlawful death of my relative in the Abu Salim massacre and the regime offers blood money. It took nearly 13 years for this paper to be sent out to the victims families. If the regime were innocent of any wrong doing then why take all that time? If they were terrorists they would certainly not have offered blood money. This blood money, in libyan culture/tradition is only offered in cases of unlawful killings. Abu Salim did happen and not how you are trying to portray it. A mass grave has been discovered just outside Abu Salim with over 1,000 victims, hopefully DNA will finally give closure to the victims families. May Allah have mercy on your soul.

Scenes From the Fall of Libya's Infamous Abu Salim Prison

MARC HERMANAUG 25 2011, 10:49 AM ET

The site of Qaddafi's alleged slaughter of 1200 prisoners was liberated on Wednesday

NALUT, Libya -- The above video purports to show yesterday's prison break from Tripoli's notorious Abu Salim prison, which fell on Wednesday. Anti-government forces in Nalut are circulating it this morning, hanging it on the local militia's Arabic [facebook page](#). Watching sections of the 11-minute video with a translator appears to confirm the video's authenticity; the narrator makes several references to the location, to Qaddafi, and to thuwar, or revolutionaries, the Libyan anti-government forces' usual term for themselves. If it's a staged job or a voice-over

scam, it would have to be an awfully artful one, done quickly overnight.

Abu Salim has long been the subject of human rights investigations. It's a symbolic place, Qaddafi's Abu Ghraib, and it's emptying has been met here as another sign of the regime's fall. Abu Salim's population included political prisoners and at least one foreign journalist, American Matthew VanDyke, who was freed yesterday after six months of captivity, reportedly in solitary confinement, since loyalist forces seized him near Brega in February.

This Human Rights Watch report investigates the infamous massacre of prisoners there in 1996. HRW claims at least 1200 prisoners died, though families did not learn of the deaths until 2002. Last year, Qaddafi's government blocked access to YouTube in Libya, after videos surfaced of a Benghazi protest by people claiming to be families of the apparent massacre's victims. Many Libyans cited that internet blockage, and the arrest of the family members, when the national protest movement began this past February, according to the Nalut source of the video.

If this video is what the Nalut militia officials claim it to be, it tells us a few things about what the prison conditions inside Abu Salim were like, and about the nature of the escapes this week. At about the 4:40 minute mark, the cameraman focuses to the interior of a cell through a slit in the iron door, showing at least three men packed into a space that looks about the size of a small bathroom. In other images of the cell interiors, we see some men have a small rug and a few pillows, but no toilet or water source, and, from what we can see of the walls, little light.

In the cell blocks, the prisoners appear to be freeing themselves, rather than being freed by anti-government soldiers. No rebel, or at least no one armed with a gun or wearing combat fatigues -- an increasingly common "uniform" among the anti-government irregulars -- appears in the video. The prisoners use blows with hammers and other blunt instruments to break the locks on the cells -- no one seems to bother with jailer's keys. This would suggest that either they don't know where the keys are kept, or had no access to them, or the keys were in the pockets of fled guards.

In total, it's a desperate if joyful scene for the people in the video. We're seeing a jailbreak into uncertainty for the men in these images -- not an organized freeing of prisoners by liberators. We see no women; it is not clear from the video where female political prisoners are kept, or if they have been freed.

No shots are heard, celebratory or otherwise, for the 11 minutes of the video. Qaddafi's dungeon, ironically, is one of the few places in Libya where you can say that this week.