

FILMS UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES



"SERVING TIME"

16 mm colour, 6 minutes 50 seconds

Narration Script

IMAGE

FOOTAGE

SOUND

NARRATOR:

HIGH SHOT
KREMS PRISON

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Krems prison, Austria. A maximum security prison. Huge, forbidding, soulless.

Oscar Wilde, once a prisoner himself, wrote about a prison like Krems. "The vilest deeds

like poison weeds, bloom well in prison air; it is only what is good in man that wastes and withers there. Pale anguish keeps the heavy gate and the warder is Despair."

GATE OPENS
POLICE VAN BRINGS
NEW INMATES

017

It is into places like this that too many societies still lock away their misfits. Their losers.

GUARD TAKES
CONVICTED MAN
TO REMAND CELL

A man stands accused of a crime ... of
breaking the rules ... and is brought to stand
before the majesty of the courts. Either he
pleads guilty or not guilty. The verdict ...
Guilty: "18 months in jail".

HISTORICAL SEQUENCE: 046
REPRODUCTIONS OF OLD
ENGRAVINGS, PRINTS,
PHOTOS

Since man first formed societies, he has
punished those who broke the rules. And
since human societies were dedicated mainly
to their own survival, the punishment did
have to be effective.

Hanging

Burning

Crucifixion ..

Torture

The galleys ..

Public humiliation ...

Banishment ...

For the last 200 years society has locked its
more troublesome members behind stone
walls.

NEWS PHOTOS, 068
NEWSREEL FOOTAGE
ATTICA REBELLION

In the sixties, in many parts of the world, there were prison riots. Inmates protested living conditions, harsh systems, excessive punishment, guard brutality. Then came Attica and other similar rebellions in different parts of the world.

STAIRWELL: 078
GUARD ESCORTS
TWO INMATES

Early in this century, a sociologist suggested abolishing prison entirely. He wrote:

"Almost anything would be an improvement.

It cannot be worse. It cannot be more brutal and useless." There are many who still hold to that view today.

Imprisonment has four purposes: punish the offender, lock him up for the protection of society, deter him from further crime and, ideally, reform him. But prisons do not deter and prisons do not reform.

CONVICT 102
INSIDE
CELL

This man is 24. Originally imprisoned for a felony, he escaped, seriously wounding a guard. He was recaptured. That was two years ago. Since then he has been in solitary confinement. He has learned needlepoint.

Has he repented of his crime, has he become a new man? And if he has not ... what are we to do with him ... and men like him? Are we to lock them away forever ... and forget them? Or is there some way we can save them?

EXTERIOR
HIRTENBERG
PRISON

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Fifty miles from Krems is a newer jail. At Hirtenberg. This prison is for first-offenders and conditions here are far different from Krems. Hirtenberg is the pattern for future Austrian prisons.

WOMAN AT WINDOW

RELATIVES IN
ROOM

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Once a month, relatives are allowed to visit prisoners. The visit is for 15 minutes only. Officially, no bodily contact is allowed. In practice, guards will sometimes look the other way. The international increase of crime is often blamed on the collapse of the family structure, prosperity and rising expectations.

MAN ARRIVING
AT GATE

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WALKS THROUGH
PRISON GROUNDS

IS ESCORTED TO
ROOM BY GUARD

Other European countries have reformed their prison systems and Denmark is probably more liberal than most. This is an open prison camp in Jutland. Only hardened offenders are sent to walled prisons in Scandinavia. Rehabilitation is the guiding principle here. Inmates live in rooms, not cells. They are not made to lose their self-respect.

MOGENS SHOWN TO
ROOM HE WILL SHARE
WITH ANOTHER
INMATE

175

Danish prison guards do not wear uniforms. This is a very significant aspect of the prison systems. The guard gives a new prisoner a key to his room ... and puts his name outside the door. The prisoners are not just numbers here. They remain people. People who have made mistakes, who have broken the rules and now must be removed from society for a while. But they are people. Danish prisoners can even vote in elections.

DINING ROOM
AT MEAL TIME

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A small thing in itself, but important, is that they wear their own clothes, except at work. This helps them retain a sense of identity. Here, the penal system does not degrade.

**SOCIAL WORKER
ON TELEPHONE**

When a man has completed his sentence, he's paid his debt, his slate is clean. The Social Service helps him line up a decent job. He will be able to make a new start without the handicap of being labelled ex-convict.

FORMER INMATE MEETS

PROSPECTIVE BOSS

Crime, unfortunately, is a matter of international concern. Every five years, the United Nations sponsors a Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, such as the session in Sydney, Australia in August 1980. Topics of discussion span the entire range of problems in crime prevention and criminal justice.

**HE IS TAKEN
TO WORKSHOP**

STARTS WORK

Prison should be but a temporary exile from society.

LAST FRAME

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