

Time to Think

Open University Journeys in British and Irish prisons during the years of conflict, 1972-2000

Oral History interview clip transcript

Name of Interviewee:	Student L
Interviewed by:	Written by participant
Date of interview:	02/11/2018

Important

Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of this transcript, however no transcript is an exact translation of the spoken word, and this document is intended to be a guide to the original recording, not replace it.

In some cases, interviewees may have made changes to the transcript.

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Student L Clip

Clip title:	Thanking Harold Wilson
Duration:	N/A – Written Interview by Student
Clip start point in full interview:	N/A – Written Interview by Student
Clip end point in full interview:	N/A – Written Interview by Student
Interview identifier:	113_S_01

Description:

Student L was imprisoned in the Official IRA Compounds (the Maze and Long Kesh Prison) in the late 1970s and studied with The Open University gaining a degree in Ancient, Early Modern and Modern History. In this clip he recalls how after his release he drew on his Open University education in Long Kesh for his Postgraduate studies with another University, how ex-prisoners sent in books to those still studying inside to help them, how other prisoners not doing the OU formally still read OU books and course materials, and ultimately how it is ironic that Official Republican prisoners had a British Prime Minister to thank for their Open University education.

Transcript:

When I was eventually released, I continued my education to Postgraduate level drawing on the knowledge learned through the OU in Long Kesh [Compounds of the Maze and Long Kesh Prison]. Those of us on the outside also helped those still incarcerated by sending in books or other materials to help their studies. Actually, even those who had not formally signed up for OU courses benefitted by reading the books and course materials of the scholars. At the end of the day, I suppose we have Harold Wilson, the man who established The Open University, to thank for all this. I would not have been in the business of thanking a British Prime Minister when I went into Long Kesh.