

S  
806

PREM 19/50H

Hunger Strike at the Maze Prison.

IRELAND.

The Dirty Protest.

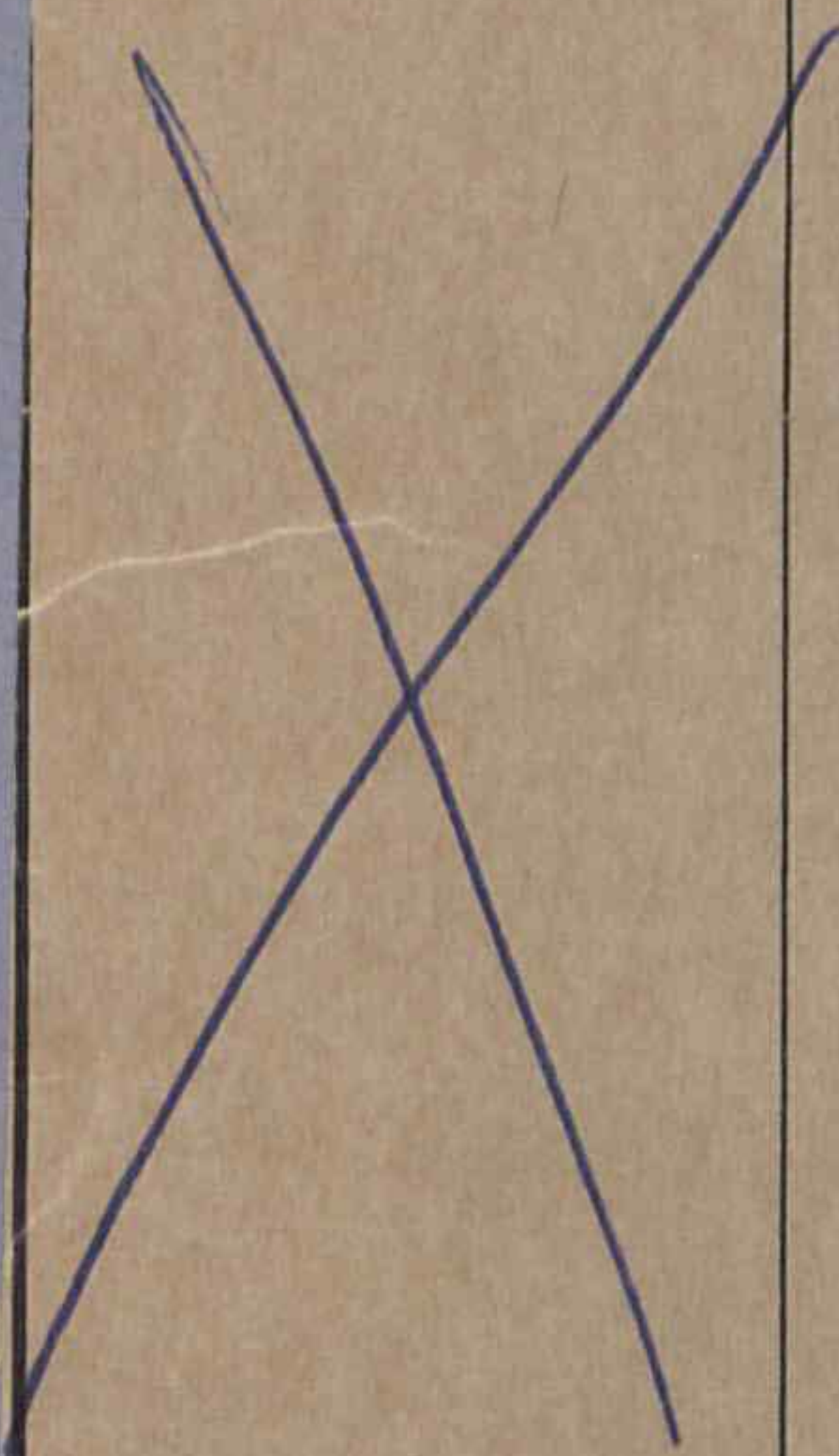
Part 3

Part 1: NOV 79

Part 3: APRIL 81

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
<del>27-4-81.</del>							
<del>28-4-81</del>							
<del>6-5-81</del>							
15.5.81							
<del>18.5.81</del>							
<del>20-5-81</del>							
20-5-81							
<del>ENDS</del>							
<p>PREM 19/504</p>							

PREM 19/504



PART ..... 3 ..... ends:-

CAW to Father Brian McCreesh of 20/5/87.

PART ..... 4 ..... begins:-

washington tel: 1577 of 20/5/87





Handwritten notes: "Inland CCN10 Press" and a large "SS" symbol.

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Principal Private Secretary*

20 May 1981

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your telegram about your brother. She and her colleagues regret as much as anyone the conditions in which a number of prisoners at the Maze have lived. But you must be aware that these were conditions which the prisoners chose to impose upon themselves.

So far as the present hunger strike is concerned, the aims which your brother and his fellow-strikers declared, or which were declared on their behalf, are simply not in any responsible Government's gift. If that was not clear at the outset of their action, it must surely be clear now. It is the Prime Minister's profound hope that those to whom your brother listens and whom he trusts will explain this to him so that even now a chance can be taken to save one life at least.

G A WHITMORE

Father Brian McCreesh

Prime Minister.

CONFIDENTIAL

GRPS 300

C O N F I D E N T I A L

FM DUBLIN 19:1115Z MAY 1981

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 162 OF 19 MAY 1981

AND TO PRIORITY NIO BELFAST

*We are getting advice from the FCO + NIO on this suggestion, but both the Department and I are against it for a number of reasons.*

PS TO THE PM.

NO10 DOWNING STREET.

*MLJ  
20v*

RENEWED RTE RADIO REQUEST FOR INTERVIEW WITH PRIME MINISTER.

1. AS YOU WILL KNOW SOME TIME AGO RTE RADIO REQUESTED AN INTERVIEW WITH THE PRIME MINISTER TO BE BROADCAST IN THE SUNDAY LUNCHTIME RADIO PROGRAMME WHICH HAS THE HIGHEST AUDIENCE OF ANY PROGRAMME HERE. AT THE TIME WE TURNED THE REQUEST DOWN. RTE HAVE NOW RENEWED TH REQUEST IN THE HOPE OF AN INTERVIEW WHICH COULD BE BROADCAST ON SUNDAY 24 MAY. AS BEFORE, THEY WOULD BE PREPARED TO COME TO LONDON AT ANY CONVENIENT TIME.

2. IN MY VIEW THERE ARE GOOD REASONS FOR NOW AGREEING TO THIS REQUEST. PUBLIC OPINION HERE IS NOT MOVING IN OUR FAVOUR. IT IS CERTAINLY REPELLED BY THE WAVE OF ARSON AND VIOLENCE (WHICH STEMS FROM THE STRENGTH OF FEELING IN SOME RURAL REPUBLICAN AREAS AND THE DUBLIN HOOLIGAN ELEMENT ON THE FRINGES OF THE DEMONSTRATIONS) AND DOES NOT SUPPORT THE CALL FOR POLITICAL STATUS. BUT MOST PEOPLE BELIEVE SOME COMPROMISE ON THE 5 DEMANDS SHOULD BE POSSIBLE AND BLAME HMG FOR CREATING CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH HAVE LED TO TROUBLE IN THE REPUBLIC.

3. WE HAVE BEEN WORKING ON THE MORE INFLUENTIAL JOURNALISTS BUT WE ARE NOW REACHING A POINT WHERE WE NEED MINISTERIAL INTERVIEWS TO MAKE THE IMPACT WHICH WILL REDRESS THE BALANCE. IN MY VIEW THE SORT OF INTERVIEW PROPOSED COULD DO MUCH TO ENSURE THAT OUR CASE GETS A BETTER HEARING IN THE REPUBLIC, PARTICULARLY IF THE PRIME MINISTER CONCENTRATED ON LISTING THE NUMEROUS IMPROVEMENTS WHICH HAVE BEEN MADE IN THE PRISON REGIME, REFUTING THE ALLEGATION THAT AN AGREEMENT WAS REACHED IN DECEMBER AND THEN BROKEN, AND EXPRESSING THE GOVERNMENT'S DEEP CONCERN AT THE LOSS OF LIFE IN THE PRISON AND OUTSIDE.

4. IF THE PRIME MINISTER IS NOT ABLE TO DO THE INTERVIEW, I RECOMMEND THAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND BE ASKED TO DO SO.

FIGG

[THIS TELEGRAM WAS NOT ADVANCED]

NORTHERN IRELAND LIMITED

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION  
NORTHERN IRELAND

RID  
NAD  
INFORMATION DEPT  
WED  
MAED  
NEWS DEPT  
SECURITY DEPT  
PUSD  
PS  
PS/LPS  
PS/MR HURD

PS/MR RIDLEY  
PS/MR BLAKER  
PS/PUS  
SIR A ACLAND  
CHIEF CLERK  
MR ADAMS  
MR BULLARD  
MR FERGUSSON  
LORD N G LENNOX  
MR BRAITHWAITE

CONFIDENTIAL

010

Dc: Mr. Alexander  
No. 10 Downing Street



*With the compliments of*  
**HER MAJESTY'S AMBASSADOR**

*Alan*  
*Do you have the*  
*previous correspondence*  
*pl.* *Lil 29/5*

**BRITISH EMBASSY  
WASHINGTON, D.C.**



FROM THE AMBASSADOR

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20008  
TELEPHONE: (202) 462-1340

19 May 1981

The Honorable  
Mario Biaggi  
2428 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington DC 20515

*Handwritten initials: H.A. and a signature*

*Dear Congressman Biaggi,*

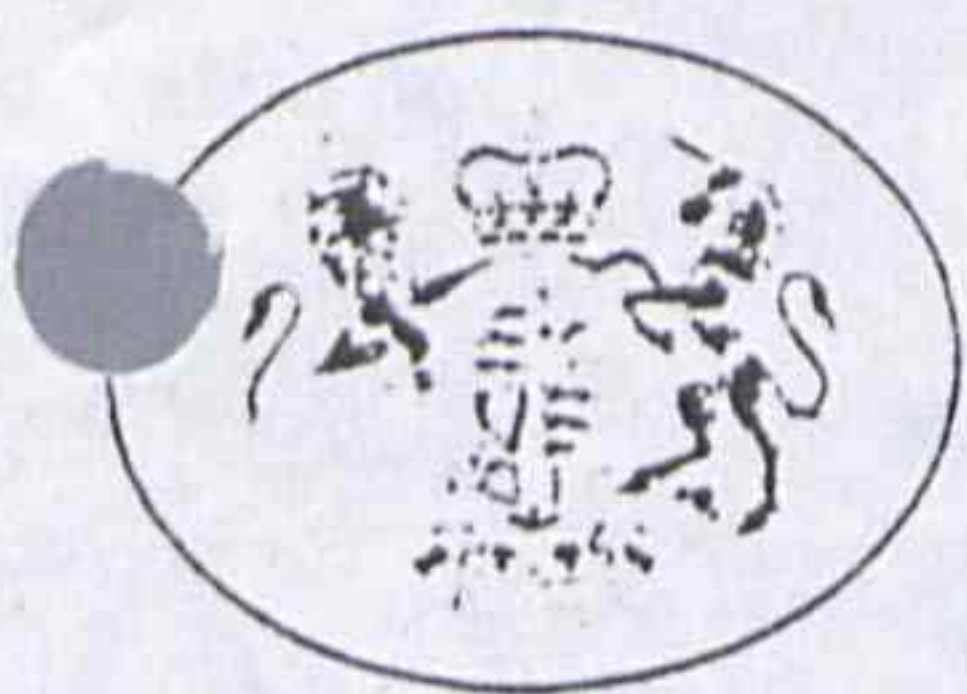
I have been asked to reply to the telegram which you recently sent to the Prime Minister about the hunger strike in Northern Ireland.

My Government deeply regrets the needless and pointless deaths of Robert Sands and Francis Hughes but their hunger strikes and those of the other prisoners at HM Prison Maze have not, as you suggest, been in pursuance of prison reform. A Provisional Sinn Fein statement issued on 5 February announcing the current hunger strike clearly stated that "we are demanding to be treated as political prisoners". I must emphasise that my Government has repeatedly made it clear that it will not concede this demand for political status as all prisoners embarking on protests of this kind well know. Our position is set out fully in the reply which the Prime Minister gave on 14 May to a message which she received from Senators Kennedy and Moynihan, Speaker O'Neill and Governor Carey of New York. I attach a copy for the information of you and your colleagues on the Ad Hoc Congressional Committee on Irish Affairs.

*Yours sincerely  
Nicholas Henderson*

Nicholas Henderson





MESSAGE OF 14 MAY FROM THE BRITISH PRIME MINISTER,  
THE RT HON MARGARET THATCHER MP, TO SENATOR KENNEDY,  
SPEAKER O'NEILL, SENATOR MOYNIHAN AND GOVERNOR CAREY

Begins:

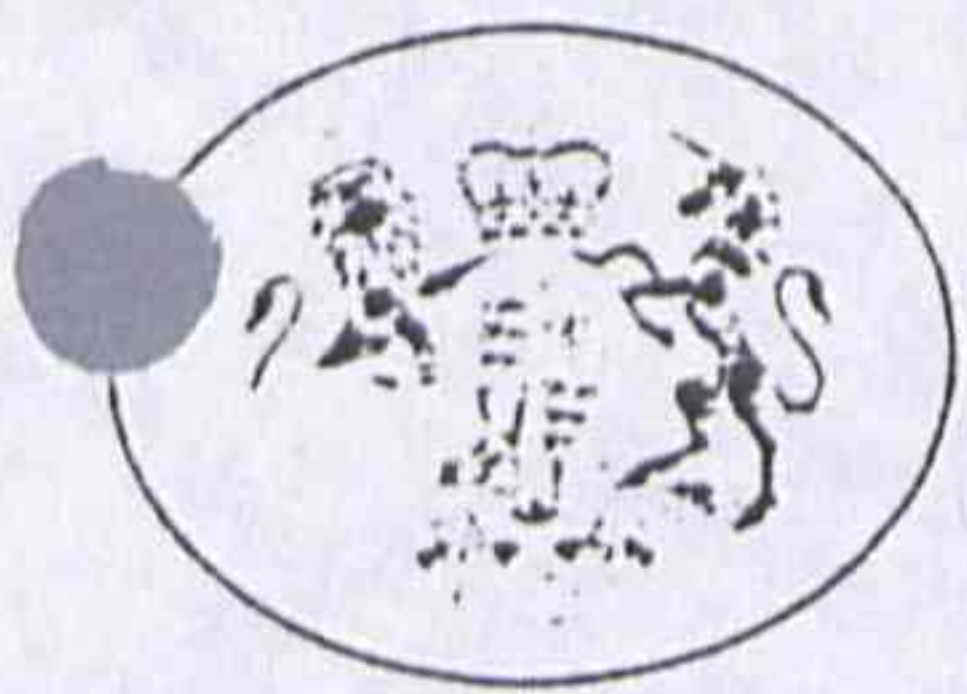
I am writing to thank you for your message of 6 May. I welcome your clear restatement of your unequivocal condemnation of all violence in Northern Ireland. I welcome too your efforts to discourage American support for the men of violence in Northern Ireland and to promote better understanding among all the people of Ireland.

You question a 'posture of inflexibility' that must lead inevitably to more violence and death in Northern Ireland. But that is not the Government's posture. It is important that there should be no misunderstanding between us. I am therefore sending you with this a full account of what has happened in the Maze Prison since the protesters' complaints were investigated by an independent international body, the European Commission of Human Rights.

This full account shows that HM Government has in fact acted with great flexibility. We have offered a series of improvements in conditions to all prisoners - most of which the protesters have rejected. We have also facilitated visits to the hunger strikers by the European Commission of Human Rights, by members of the Dublin Parliament, by the representative of the official Opposition here and by the personal representative of the Pope. None of these actions has had any effect upon the prisoners, whose sole purpose is to establish a political justification for their appalling record of murder and violence - murder and violence which deserve the same total condemnation in Northern Ireland as they would get in the United States.

The prisoners, and those who speak for them, claim that the protests are not about prison conditions, but are about

/the demand



the demand for political status. Political status would mean that the prisoners, not the prison authorities, would determine what the day to day regime within the prison should be. On this the Government will not compromise. It is not prepared, through the granting of political status, to legitimise criminal acts undertaken in pursuit of political ends. It is not prepared to surrender control of the prisons. It is not prepared to be coerced by protest action, in whatever form, into changes for which there is no justification on humanitarian grounds. We know from experience that to do so would not bring the protests to an end. On the contrary, yielding to coercion would provoke further coercion, and would encourage more young people to follow the path of violence.

It is the Government's profound hope that there will be no more deaths directly or indirectly due to the present hunger strike. Such deaths can serve no purpose. If political status remains the protesters' objective, then it cannot and will not be conceded. If they have other grounds for complaint against the prison regime, then further recourse to the European Commission of Human Rights remains available to them. The Government has shown that it is prepared to respond to the Commission's findings and to facilitate in any way it can the Commission's conduct of its investigations.

More widely, the Government remains committed to the search for ways in which the people of Northern Ireland can assume greater responsibility for their own affairs, through political institutions in which all sections of the Community can have confidence. It believes that the best hope for long term peace and stability is to be found in the political

/process



process, not in violence and intimidation. And the Government remains determined to build on the unique relationship that already exists between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, to the benefit of all the peoples of these islands.

Ends.



ANNEX TO PRIME MINISTER THATCHER'S MESSAGE OF 14 MAY

In 1978, the European Commission of Human Rights considered the situation at the Maze Prison in the context of an application made to the Commission by four prisoners.

The prisoners' main complaint was that their right to freedom of conscience and belief (under Article 9 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms) was denied them because the prison authorities sought to apply to them the normal prison regime. The Commission in their decision of June 1980 found that a right to preferential status for a certain category of prisoners was not amongst those guaranteed by the Convention or by Article 9 in particular.

The applicants also argued that the regime under which they lived amounted to inhuman and degrading treatment and punishment in breach of Article 3 of the Convention. The Commission declared that all their complaints under this Article were inadmissible on the grounds that they were 'manifestly ill-founded'. At that stage many of the prisoners were, as you know, conducting a uniquely disgusting form of protest in which they fouled their cells with food and excreta. They had broken up furniture in their cells and had used it to damage the windows and other fittings. The European Commission recognised that these conditions were self-inflicted. The prison authorities, of course, made arrangements for the cells to be cleaned and repainted at frequent intervals.

But among their other findings the Commission emphasised the prison authorities' duty 'to keep under constant review their reaction to recalcitrant prisoners engaged in a developing and protracted protest' and commented that 'efforts should have been made by the authorities to ensure that the applicants could avail of certain facilities such as taking regular

/exercise



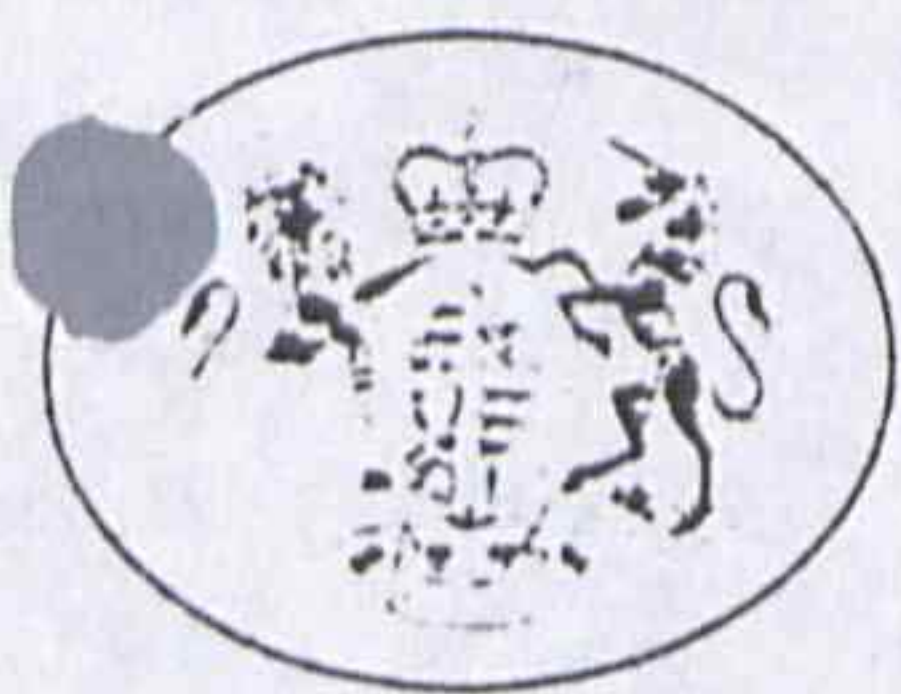
exercise in the open air with some form of clothing (other than prison clothing) and making greater use of the prison amenities under similar conditions'. It also said that 'arrangements should have been made to enable the applicants to consult outside medical specialists even though they were not prepared to wear prison uniform or underwear.'.

Thus the prisoners' claim for political or special status has been investigated recently and decisively rejected by an independent authority of the highest standing: the conditions at the Maze Prison were covered as part of the Commission's investigation and no serious complaint against them was sustained, and the Commission did not, where it felt necessary, hesitate to criticise the Government and the prison authorities.

These criticisms were respected and new arrangements to satisfy them have been in force for more than a year. That is not all. During the course of 1980 the protesting prisoners were offered, whether or not they ended their protest, a range of improved conditions in connection with letters, visits, recreation, association and compassionate leave. In October last year the Government ended prison uniform as such in Northern Ireland prisons in favour of the issue of civilian-type clothing in a range of colours and styles. Of these measures, the protesting prisoners had, by the beginning of March this year, made use in some cases of the facility of additional visits to relatives in ill-health. Apart from that there has been no response.

The first hunger strike ended on December 18, 1980. Contrary to what has been alleged, no undertakings were given to the hunger strikers or the remaining protesting prisoners at that time, before it or after: what the Government had sought to do was to explain to all protesting prisoners what facilities and opportunities were available to them within the existing

/prison

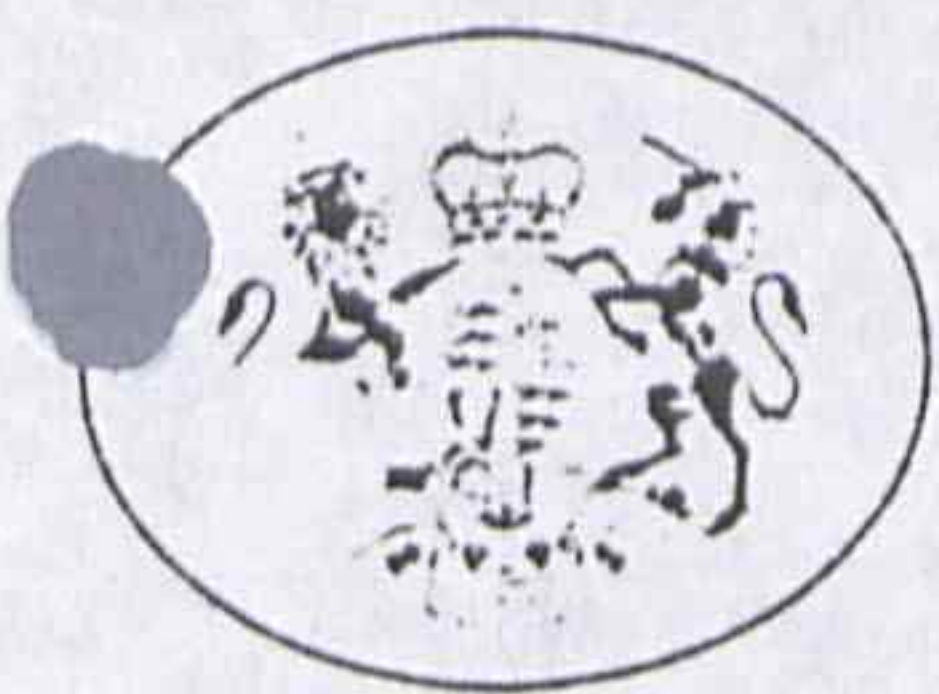


prison regime, which, as was also made clear to them, the Government is committed to maintaining and, as circumstances allow, improving. That explanation stands and the same facilities remain available. When the ending of the first hunger strike failed to lead to the ending of the other protests, the prison authorities, with the full backing of the Government, took the initiative to move 96 of the protesting prisoners into clean cells. When it became clear that those prisoners had stopped fouling their cells, normal cell furniture was provided.

This process completed, the next step towards a conforming regime was the issue of the civilian-type clothing. The prisoners refused this, saying that they were not prepared to wear it unless their own clothing was provided at the same time: and that they would take part in no work other than that of cleaning their own cells and receiving full-time education. (The Commission had, incidentally, said in its findings that it did not consider there to be anything inherently degrading or objectionable about the requirement to wear a prison uniform or to work.) The Government had no choice but to say it could not accept these conditions. The prisoners' response, on 27 January, was to smash the furniture they had been given and to damage the fabric of their cells.

On March 2 the prisoners engaged in the 'dirty' protest at the Maze, and at Armagh, said they were ending this form of protest, but were doing so not as a step towards conformity with the prison regime but in support of the hunger strike which had then just begun. The Government nevertheless welcomed the prisoners' decision to end the conditions that they had imposed upon themselves: the prisoners were transferred to clean cells as quickly as the necessary arrangements could be made: and when they asked for the

/issue of



issue of furniture this was, notwithstanding the actions of January 27, initiated. As in January, the prison authorities responded to this scaling down of protest action by scaling down the punishment awarded, in this case by reducing by half the rate at which the protesting prisoners forfeited remission. For those prisoners who had ended protest action altogether since the previous hunger strike, the prison authorities had already, as they had undertaken, completed a review of remission and, where the prisoner concerned had by a period of conforming behaviour shown that his decision to cease his protest was a firm one, restored some of the remission previously forfeited.

=====



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

19 May 1981

Dear Mike,

Northern Ireland Prisons Dispute

Prime Minister  
The clothing regime in the  
Maze is plainly a good deal more  
liberal than the general  
practice in the U.S.

1/24  
20/1

In Michael Alexander's letter of 14 May recording the Prime Minister's meeting of the previous day on the Anglo-Irish Joint Studies, he noted amongst the views of the meeting that it would be helpful to know whether convicted prisoners in the United States were allowed to wear their own clothing.

In nearly all prisons own clothing is not allowed. The full position is as follows:

- a. Federal Prisons. In the 42 federal prisons prisoners do not wear uniform as such but wear standard issue clothing, usually military surplus. It is compulsory wear. Own clothing is not allowed.
- b. State Prisons. Regulations vary from prison to prison. Some open prisons allow freedom of dress but most have standard issue clothing as in the federal system. Some of the Southern States still have full prison uniform.

I am copying this letter to recipients of yours.

mf.  
7- ever  
G.G.H.

(G G H Walden)  
Private Secretary

Mike Pattison Esq  
10 Downing Street



SECRET

6

Ref. A04946

PRIME MINISTER

---

Prison Protests in Northern Ireland

You are due to have a meeting with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and other Ministers to discuss this subject at 6.00 pm on Wednesday 20th May. To provide a basis for discussion his Private Secretary wrote to Michael Alexander on 15th May enclosing a paper.

2. Although in his paper the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland defines his aim as seeking his colleagues' views on the way forward, there is no suggestion that there should be a change of policy in regard to the hunger strikers. But the meeting should provide a useful occasion for an objective assessment of the wider implications of the hunger strike including the position of the security forces, international pressures, the long-term prisons problem in Northern Ireland and the attitudes of the two communities in Northern Ireland.

3. The hunger strike could be a very long-drawn out affair. The PIRA claim that they have got 70 potential hunger strikers lined up, so that as current strikers die there will be a steady stream of replacements. Public opinion in the United Kingdom and in Parliament has not so far shown much reaction to the deaths which have taken place to date. Abroad and in Northern Ireland the effects have been greater.

4. The ECHR looks like a dead duck as a means of bringing the hunger strike to an end, at least unless and until the Provisional IRA change their minds and abandon their insistence on the five demands. In the meantime the ECHR's only conceivable advantage is as an instrument in the propaganda war: if we stick firmly to the line that we shall not stand in the way of but facilitate the Commission's pursuit of any complaint which is admissible under the Convention, it is difficult to fault that position, and we have a reasonably good defence against the charge of inflexibility on this score.

5. But hunger strikers will, it seems, go on dying. We ought to try to assess the effects of this on the two communities in Northern Ireland, and on the security forces. It will presumably harden the polarisation of the two

SECRET

SECRET

communities. The Protestant community will no doubt be reasonably content to see the British Government standing firm, and their paramilitaries will hold off. But will continuing deaths weaken the strength and support of the SDLP in the Catholic community, and incline them to turn back to the Provisionals? It would be a serious development in security terms, if a growing sense of despair in the Catholic community increased their readiness to offer safe havens and other assistance to the PIRA terrorists. And the price of standing firm may be - perhaps is already being - increased casualties in the security forces. Do we have to do any more in political terms to maintain their morale in the face of these attacks?

6. The other question is that of long-term political development. The apparent absence of a policy on long-term political development represents a real weakness in the Government's present position. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland proposes that after the District Council elections he should propose to invite all the local parties to come and talk to him about how we might best proceed. But should he not have some positive ideas of his own to suggest? Is there a risk that the situation will become further complicated and inflamed if at the same time there is an election campaign being waged in the Republic? It is perhaps premature to spend much time at this meeting on this subject. It is now unlikely that there could be any significant development this side of the Summer Recess, and before embarking upon a process of consultations the Secretary of State ought to let the dust settle after the local elections in Northern Ireland - and await the result of the general election in the Republic. But the Northern Ireland Office could well use the interval to consider what possible ideas the Secretary of State might contribute to a political discussion later in the year.

7. In regard to long-term policy on prisons, paragraph 7 of Mr. Atkins's note explains that some review of the present prison regime will be needed before the new prison opens at Maghaberry in late 1982. While this is true, is it likely to be helpful in relation to resolving the present problems?

#### HANDLING

8. In regard to handling this meeting you may care to leave the question of the ECHR to one side as that has already been recently ventilated. Instead, after inviting the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland to introduce his paper, you may like to start by concentrating on the short-term problem. Discussion might include the following points:-

SECRET

SECRET

- (a) What are likely to be the effects on the two communities in Northern Ireland of continuing deaths of hunger strikers? Is there anything the Government can and should do to counter those effects, in so far as they are malign?
- (b) What are the views of the GOC and Chief Constable on the ability of the security forces to stand up to the current strains? Do they expect any significant increase in these as more hunger strikers die? Are further reinforcements likely to be required? Is there likely to be a need for any change in the basic pattern of security force operations?
- (c) Does the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary consider that the current PIRA propaganda campaign abroad is being sufficiently effectively opposed? Paragraphs 17 and 18 of the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland's note deals with this problem.
- (d) Does the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland anticipate any great problems in Parliament as a result of the hunger strike?

#### CONCLUSION

9. It will not be the aim of your meeting to arrive at any fundamental conclusions affecting current policy. There is general agreement that in relation to the hunger strikers this must remain unchanged. But you may wish to seek to achieve the following three objectives at your meeting:-

- (a) To take due account of the views of the GOC and Chief Constable on the ways in which the security forces might be assisted to cope with the present problems.
- (b) To agree with Mr. Atkins's proposals to set up an informal group of officials to deal with the propaganda campaign.
- (c) To recognise the need for, and invite the Secretary of State to consider the possible form of, a new policy on long-term political development in Northern Ireland.

RA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

19th May, 1981

SECRET

SECRET



This is a copy - The original was received  
extracted and retained  
CO under section 3(4)

FCO

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

19 May 1981

Dear Stephen,

MAZE PROTESTERS AND THE  
EUROPEAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

1. The Prime Minister held a meeting yesterday morning with your Secretary of State to discuss the possible reinvolvement of the European Commission on Human Rights in attempts to resolve the hunger strike at the Maze. Sir Robert Armstrong, Mr Marshall and \*~~~~\* were also present.

2. Your Secretary of State said that in 1978 four prisoners in the Maze had brought a wide range of complaints against the British Government under the European Human Rights Convention. In June 1980 the ECHR had rejected most of these complaints as inadmissible but two of them had been adjourned. The first of these was a complaint, under Article 8 of the Convention, about alleged restrictions on the applicants' correspondence. The second complaint, made under Article 13, was a claim by the applicants that they lacked an effective remedy before a national authority for alleged violation of Convention rights. We had maintained, and still did now, that these two complaints were inadmissible. Recently, however, the Commission had suggested, in an effort to help resolve the hunger strike, that they should deem the Article 13 complaint to be admissible so that they could investigate it and that we should not argue once more our position on admissibility, as a substantive objection in law, until they had completed their inquiry. The NIO's legal advice had been that our position would in this way be completely preserved and we had therefore agreed that the Commission should proceed as they had proposed. Under the provisions of the Convention the Commission, acting under Article 28, (a) would examine the complaints and ascertain the facts and subsequently (b) would place itself at the disposal of the parties with a view to securing a friendly settlement. The British Government had an obligation to facilitate (a) but did not have a similar obligation to facilitate the subsequent step at (b). If this procedure did not lead to a conclusion satisfactory to both parties, the Commission would proceed to arrive at a judicial decision on the complaints. The Commission now wanted to enter upon the procedure at (a). The question for decision was whether the Government should indicate a

SECRET

SECRET

- 2 -

readiness to take part in the procedure under (b) or should make it clear now that it would not participate because it had nothing to offer.

3. Mr Atkins said that the PIRA had been in touch with the NIO through a known channel and had indicated that they wished to see the Commission follow the Article 28 procedure. They still believed that the Government was on a hook and was looking for ways of getting off it. If we did not facilitate an inquiry by the Commission under Article 28, the PIRA would claim that all we had said in the past about being ready to facilitate the involvement of the Commission in attempts to solve the hunger strike had been false and that the British were as inflexible as they always had been. There was a major risk that the Government would suffer a substantial public relations reverse, especially in the United States and the Republic. He therefore proposed that we should facilitate the Article 28 procedure.

\*~\* added that the PIRA's perception of the issue of the hunger strike was different from ours. They believed that the deaths of Sands and Hughes had strengthened their position and that the Government was in difficulty. They appeared to think that if the ECHR applied the Article 28 procedure this would give them the substance of what they wanted.

5. Mr Marshall said that the PIRA were pressing strongly for an indication of the Government's attitude. If we did not reach a decision within the next few hours, they would assume that our view of the Article 28 procedure was negative and they would begin to make this clear in their propaganda.

6. The Prime Minister said that she was worried that the Article 28 procedure was the start of a very slippery slope. The fact was that the Government was not on a hook. We had always said that we would give the Commission facilities to conduct an investigation provided a proper and specific complaint was laid with them. It seemed to her that the danger of the Article 28 procedure was that we would appear to be negotiating, and that she was not prepared to do. Moreover, it would be disingenuous of us to allow the Commission to embark upon this course if we had no intention of accepting a friendly settlement. It would be better if the Commission examined the complaints and ascertained the facts and then proceeded to a decision, omitting the stage of attempting to secure a friendly settlement. She did not feel able to reach a final view on the basis of the information before her and even though the matter was urgent, your Secretary of State should prepare a note setting out the question for decision, together with the advantages and disadvantages of the course proposed, which would serve as the basis for a further discussion.

7. Those present subsequently met again yesterday evening to consider the note attached to John Marshall's letter of 18 May to me. On that occasion the Home Secretary and the Attorney General were also present.

\*~\* Names deleted and retained under Section 3(4).

SECRET

Wayland, 13 October 2011

SECRET

- 3 -

8. Your Secretary of State said that since the morning meeting the PIRA had come to realise that the Article 28 procedure was not a route by which they were going to see their five demands met. They were therefore no longer interested in proceeding in this way and were not pressing the Government to make a statement setting out its own views on the Article 28 procedure. There was therefore no need for a statement on the lines of the draft attached to Mr Marshall's letter. But it remained the advice of his security advisers that it was important that the Government avoided appearing as the party which prevented the ECHR trying to help resolve the hunger strike. He still proposed therefore that the Government should go along with the first part of the Article 28 procedure ( (a) above ) and that, even if we eventually said that we had no proposals for a friendly settlement to offer, we should not make this clear at the very outset, since to do so would effectively bring the procedure to an immediate halt.

9. The Prime Minister said that Article 13 referred to the duty of a signatory of the Convention to provide an effective remedy before a national authority for alleged violation of Convention rights. But there was no evidence that any rights had been violated. The only possibility was that rights concerning correspondence, which were covered by Article 8, had been contravened, but that complaint had not yet been investigated. It seemed to her that it was only in this area that Article 13 could apply, once an investigation - which we should certainly facilitate - had been completed and a violation demonstrated.

10. The Attorney General said that as regards the Article 28 procedure generally, although he was worried at the precedent which was being created, he believed that our position on admissibility was fully preserved and that we would be able, if necessary, to argue our case at a later date. Article 13 did not apply only to the Article 8 complaint in this case but allowed the Commission to investigate other alleged violations of Convention rights, even including complaints which they had earlier rejected. The friendly settlement which the Article 28 procedure provided for could range very widely but if the Commission had to move to a judicial decision, this had to be related narrowly to specific complaints.

11. The discussion then turned to the draft statement attached to John Marshall's letter, and a number of amendments were agreed.

12. The Prime Minister, summing up the discussion, said that they agreed that the Commission should examine the Article 8 and Article 13 complaints and that the Government should facilitate their efforts to ascertain the facts. Even though there was now no immediate need for the Government to issue a statement, the text which they had agreed (copy attached) would serve as a record of the meeting's conclusions and could be drawn upon as necessary.

SECRET

SECRET

- 4 -

13. I am sending copies of this letter and of its attachment to John Halliday (Home Office), Jim Nursaw (Law Officers' Department) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

Yours truly,

John Whitman.

Stephen Boys-Smith, Esq.,  
Northern Ireland Office.

SECRET

A

# SECRET

## STATEMENT BY HMG

During 1978, four of the protesting prisoners in the Maze brought certain complaints before the European Commission on Human Rights.

The protesters in the Maze are claiming "political status", a claim which finds expression in what are known as the "five demands". Although the five demands as now formulated do not correspond precisely with the complaints made, their substance was covered by those complaints, and those complaints - save for the complaint relating to interference with correspondence under Article 8 which was adjourned - were considered by the Commission last year. In the Commission's Partial Decision of June 1980 they were rejected as inadmissible because they were either "manifestly ill-founded" or otherwise incompatible with the Convention. As regards prisoners' correspondence all conforming prisoners in fact get letters and parcels (and visits) equal to or even beyond what is demanded.

In addition to the Article 8 complaint referred to above, a complaint under Article 13 - about the availability of an effective remedy before a national authority for an alleged violation of human rights as set out in the Convention - which does not figure in the five demands - was also adjourned. All the complaints by these prisoners of alleged violation of human rights were rejected by the Commission as manifestly ill-founded or otherwise incompatible with the Convention. The Commission is now proceeding, under the terms of the Convention, to examine the two remaining complaints. The Government will

# SECRET



SECRET

- 2 -

of course facilitate the work of the Commission under the Convention in examining the complaints and ascertaining the facts. However, it maintains its refusal to concede the five demands, and is prepared if necessary to justify its position before the Committee of Ministers or the European Court of Human Rights.

SECRET



10 DOWNING STREET

PRIME MINISTER

In the light of what you now know about Father McCreech's activities at the Maze prison last weekend, you may think that his telegram does not merit a personal reply from you. Would you be content for us to send a Private Secretary response on your behalf as in the attached draft? *Yes - agreed.*

You may also like to see the press statement put out by the NIO this afternoon to get the facts on the record. This is below the draft.

*Excellence*  
*mb* *MAP*

19 May 1981

DRAFT PRIVATE SECRETARY LETTER TO FATHER BRIAN MCCREESH

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your telegram about your brother. She and her colleagues regret as much as anyone the conditions in which a number of prisoners at the Maze have lived. But you must be aware that these were conditions which the prisoners chose to impose upon themselves.

So far as the present hunger strike is concerned, the aims which your brother and his fellow-strikers declared, or which were declared on their behalf, are simply not in any responsible Government's gift. If that was not clear at the outset of their action, it must surely be clear now. It is the Prime Minister's profound hope that those to whom your brother listens and whom he trusts will explain this to him so that even now a chance can be taken to save one life at least.

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,  
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

Mike Pattison Esq  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1

19 May 1981

*Dear Mike*

I attach for the Prime Minister's consideration a draft reply to the telegram sent to her by Father Brian McCreesh at the weekend.

You might also like to see a draft of a Press Notice we propose to release today (to set the record straight so far as McCreesh's behaviour is concerned).

*Yours sincerely*  
*M W Hopkins*

M W HOPKINS

jg

DRAFT LETTER

FILE NUMBER.....

ADDRESSEE'S REFERENCE.....

To	Enclosures	Copies to be sent to
Father Brian McCreesh Parochial House Coal Island Co Tyrone Northern Ireland		
(Full Postal Address)		(Full Address, if Necessary)

LETTER DRAFTED FOR SIGNATURE BY.....  
(Name of Signatory)

*The P.M. has asked me to*

Thank you for your telegram about your brother. <sup>She her</sup> I and my colleagues regret as much as anyone the conditions in which a number of prisoners at the Maze have lived. But you must be aware that these were conditions which the prisoners chose to impose upon themselves.

So far as the present hunger strike is concerned, the aims which your brother and his fellow-strikers declared, or which were declared on their behalf, are simply not in any responsible Government's gift. If that was not clear at the outset of <sup>the P.M.'s</sup> their action, it must surely be clear now. It is my profound hope that those to whom your brother listens and whom he trusts will explain this to him so that even now a chance can be taken to save one life at least.

NIO PRESS STATEMENT

Certain allegations have been made about the conduct of medical and nursing staff at the Maze Prison on Saturday, 16 May, in relation to Raymond McCreesh who was then on day 56 of his hunger strike. The facts are as follows:-

Raymond McCreesh had made clear, on several occasions since the start of his hunger strike, his decision not to take nourishment or to accept medical treatment as his condition deteriorated.

The consequences of this decision were explained to him and he was then told by the medical staff that his decision would be respected and that unless he changed his mind there would be no medical intervention.

On Saturday, 16 May, McCreesh indicated his willingness to accept nourishment and medical treatment. He was however in a confused state of mind and the doctors in attendance did not regard his statements as sufficient to authorise medical intervention in view of his mental state and his previously clearly expressed contrary views.

The doctors accordingly asked to see McCreesh's closest family relatives and told them that McCreesh had indicated his willingness to accept nourishment and medical treatment but, because of his confused mental state, sought guidance from them. After the family members had visited McCreesh, the family acting through Father

.../

E.R.

.../

McCreesh, a brother of Raymond McCreesh, gave clear and unequivocal advice to the doctors that there was to be no medical intervention. The wish of the family was accordingly respected.

Group/Class ..... PREM 19 .....  
Piece ..... 504 .....

Minute from Ingham to  
Whitmore dated 19 May 1981

Paper extracted and  
temporarily retained  
under Section 3(4)  
pending completion of  
review.  
(date) ..... 13 October 2011 .....  
(Signed) ..... M. Wayland .....

put back in place

5 MARCH 2012

AS



MR. WHITMORE

I have taken down over the telephone the following transcript of a conversation between the McCreesh family and Raymond McCreesh in the Maze last weekend. I have not inquired how the transcript was come by. It is as follows:

Father McCreesh:                   Where are you?

Raymond McCreesh:                I am in hospital in Scotland.

Father McCreesh:                You are not in hospital in Scotland. You are in Long Kesh Concentration Camp.

LATER

Father McCreesh:                Your brother and I were proud to carry the coffins of Bobby Sands and Frank Hughes. They are in heaven now waiting for you.

LATER

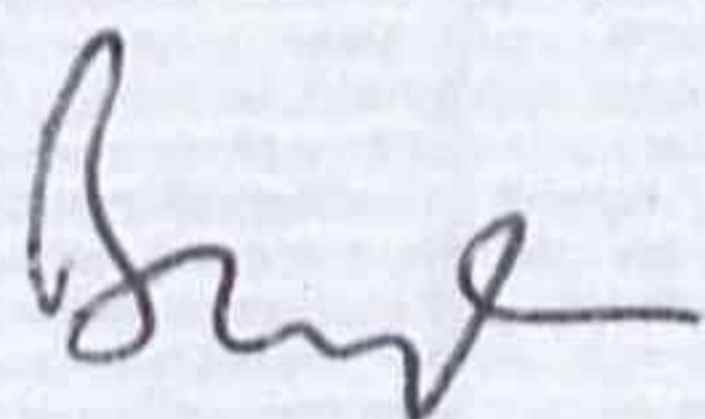
Two doctors meet the McCreesh family and say:

Do you wish us to try to resuscitate Raymond and try to save his life?

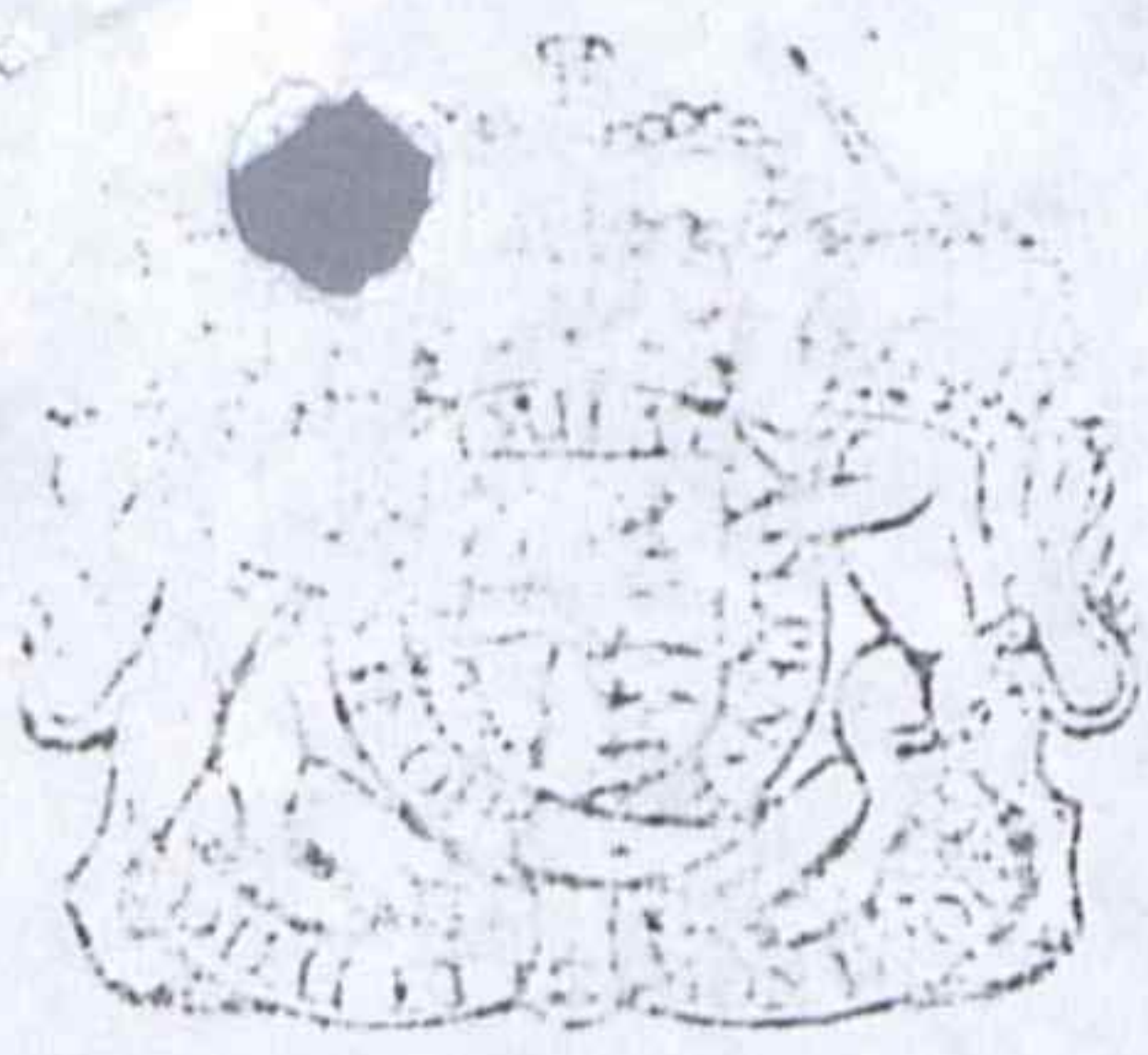
Father McCreesh:                No. We know Raymond's wishes and we respect them. Nothing is to be done.

We cannot, of course, refer to this conversation in public; nor can we admit to its existence in private.

You may have seen the attached statement put out by the Northern Ireland Office today dealing with the McCreesh family's rejection of the facts of the case.



B. INGHAM  
19 May, 1981



# Northern Ireland Office

## Press Notice

Great George Street, London, SW1P 3AJ. Telephone Enquiries 01- 233 4626  
Stormont Castle, Belfast, BT4 3ST. Telephone Enquiries Belfast 63011

L9/81

19 May 1981

### CASE OF RAYMOND McCREESH

Certain allegations have been made about the conduct of medical and nursing staff at the Maze Prison on Saturday May 16 in relation to Raymond McCreesh, a convicted prisoner who was then on the 56th day of his hunger strike. The facts are as follows:

McCreesh had made clear on several occasions since the start of his hunger strike his decision not to take nourishment or to accept medical treatment as his condition deteriorated. The consequences of this decision were explained to him and he was then told by the medical staff that his decision would be respected and that unless he changes his mind there would be no medical intervention.

On Saturday May 16 he indicated his willingness to accept nourishment and medical treatment. He was, however, in a confused state of mind and the doctors in attendance did not regard his statements as sufficient to authorise medical intervention in view of his mental state and his previously clearly expressed contrary views.

The doctors accordingly asked to see McCreesh's nearest family relatives, told them that McCreesh had indicated his willingness to accept nourishment and medical treatment but because of his confused mental state they now sought guidance from them.

After the family members had visited McCreesh, the family acting through Father McCreesh, a brother of Raymond McCreesh, gave clear and unequivocal advice to the doctors that there was to be no medical intervention. The wish of the family was accordingly respected.



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

19 May 1981

*Ian M. Paisley*

Thank you for your telegram of 14 May.

I am sorry that you did not find it possible to take up my offer of a meeting last week. As you say in your telegram, you made your request to see me after my meeting with Mr. Hume had been arranged. By that time my diary for the end of last week and the beginning of this was already very overcrowded, and the only way I could see you urgently was by offering you a comparatively short meeting. Since then my office has tried continually to get in touch with you again in order to arrange a time for a rather longer meeting in the latter half of this week, but despite leaving messages asking you to get in touch with him, my Private Secretary has not heard from you. Nonetheless, I am of course still ready to meet you, if you wish.

*Yours sincerely  
Margaret Thatcher*

The Reverend Ian Paisley, M.P.



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

In addition to the Article 8 complaint referred to above, a complaint under Article 13 — about the availability of an <sup>an</sup> effective remedy before a national authority for an alleged violation of human rights as set out in the Convention — which does not figure in the five demands — was also adjourned. All the complaints by these prisoners of alleged violation of human rights were rejected by the Commission as manifestly ill-founded or otherwise incompatible with the Convention. The Commission is now proceeding, under the terms of the Convention, to examine the two remaining complaints. The Gov<sup>t</sup> will of course facilitate the work of the Commission under the Convention in examining the complaints and ascertaining the facts. However, it maintains its refusal to concede the five demands, and is prepared if necessary to justify its position before the Committee of Ministers or the European Court of Human Rights.



SECRET

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,  
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

Deputy Under Secretary of State

Clive Whitmore Esq  
10 Downing Street

18 May 1981

*Dear Clive,*

ECHR

I enclose a Note for this evening's 7.30 meeting with the Prime Minister. It has not yet been seen by my Secretary of State who is on his way back from his meeting with the Chief Constable and GOC. It seeks to provide the Prime Minister with the additional material for which she asked, and to assess the two courses open to the Government.

From a telephone call I have just received I would add that the very strong advice from the Chief Constable and the GOC is that in their considered view it would be far better, from the point of view of maintaining order in the province, to engage in the Article 28(b) procedure, even if we believe it will not lead to a settlement, than to let it be known that we are not prepared to participate because we see no future in it.

One last point: the Provisionals, we have learnt in the course of the day, now understand (as they did not over the weekend) that HMG does not intend to use the Article 28(b) procedure as a cover for giving in to their five demands. As a result, they are having second thoughts about taking part in the procedure. This is a further reason why HMG should not back out, since if we indicate our willingness to play our part (in the muted terms of the draft statement attached to the enclosed paper) this will leave them with the difficult PR problem.

I am copying this to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Yours sincerely,*  
*John*  
J A MARSHALL

SECRET

European Commission of Human Rights and the Maze caseNote by officials

1. In 1978 four protesting prisoners in the Maze brought a wide range of complaints, some jointly, some individually, against HMG under the European Human Rights Convention.

2. In June 1980 most of these were rejected as inadmissible. Two complaints were adjourned. They were:

Article 8

".... The applicants finally complain of the restrictions on their correspondence as regards both incoming and outgoing mail and limitations on writing facilities."

Article 13

"They additionally claim that they have lacked and continue to lack an effective remedy before a national tribunal contrary to this provision."

3. These two complaints, under arrangements set out in Annex A, have, with HMG's concurrence, now been declared admissible. Under the provisions of the Convention four steps will follow in succession:

(i) Under Article 28 the Commission (a) will examine the complaints and ascertain the facts; and (b) it will place itself at the disposal of the parties with a view to securing a "friendly settlement". HMG has an obligation to facilitate (a); there is no corresponding obligation to facilitate the procedure at (b).

(ii) If the procedure at (i) does not lead to a conclusion satisfactory to both parties, the Commission proceeds to arrive at a Decision on the complaints.

SECRET

E.R.

(iii) The Committee of Ministers considers the Decision and how it shall be implemented. If no agreed conclusion is reached, it is open to either HMG or the Committee of Ministers (but not the four plaintiffs) to refer the issues to the European Court of Human Rights.

(iv) The judgment of the Court is legally binding on the Government.

4. The present position is that the Commission is now entering upon the procedure at 3(i) above. HMG has no option but to furnish "all necessary facilities" to enable the examination under (a) to proceed; the immediate issue is: should HMG indicate a willingness to take part in the procedure under (b), or should it make it clear forthwith that it will not participate because it has nothing to offer?

5. Articles 8 and 13 are narrow in scope and would of themselves offer little opportunity for consideration of other issues in dispute at the Maze. But under the Article 28(b) procedure the Commission will be looking for a settlement on the basis of human rights as defined in the Convention, which permits rather more scope. The Commission would try to get at the underlying causes of the complaint, and would seek to identify any common ground between the two sides. It would be open to it, in the light of its contacts with the parties, to originate proposals of its own.

6. If a settlement is not agreed, the Commission's role reverts to the narrow judicial task of reaching a Decision on the outstanding issues, but in doing this it would operate within a very strict legal interpretation of the scope of the relevant Articles. The broad approach allowed under Article 28 would no longer be available.

SECRET

7. The dilemma facing the Government is this: if they decline completely to play any part in the Article 28(b) procedure - as is their right - this is bound to become known and the Government will be exposed to very sharp criticism for its "inflexibility" (a charge already levelled at it over the deaths of two hunger strikers to date). It will be said to be action contrary to the spirit of the Convention. This criticism will be particularly severe in the Irish Republic, in the US, and overseas generally. It will be necessary - and difficult - to rebut the allegation that HMG has blocked up what to some observers will appear to be a reasonable and hopeful procedure - a way to an acceptable settlement. It would suit the PIRA book for the Government to be blamed for this, would encourage violence, and would adversely affect the morale of moderate Catholics. (The Secretary of State will bring an up-to-date assessment of this back from his meeting this afternoon with the GOC and Chief Constable). It is in HMG's interests to keep the ECHR involved. Its support on political status (and also on the question of prison clothing, and work) has been of immense value; even its criticisms of inflexibility afforded us an opportunity to make sensible changes. It might afford us further opportunities.

8. On the other hand, if the Government enters into the Article 28(b) procedure, it would become apparent after a time that, being unwilling to negotiate, they had nothing to offer (apart from improvements in the humane prison regime - for all conforming prisoners - which we have already made clear we stand ready to consider). The danger is that hopes will be raised which will later be dashed, and at the end of the day the press reaction could be as bad as if the Article 28(b) procedure had been rejected outright.



●. Over the weekend the representatives of the four plaintiffs indicated that they wished HMG's sincerity in this matter to be indicated in a public statement. A possible statement, robustly asserting the points which the Prime Minister this morning indicated that she would wish made, but stopping short of actually declining to play a minimal role ("facilitate the work of the Commission") is attached at Annex B.

10. If it were decided to refuse to operate under Article 28(b), then the Government's defence would have to be a re-iteration of its position on the five demands, and its readiness to consider a Decision by the Commission and to be taken to the Court if necessary.

SECRET

In 1978 four prisoners at the Maze complained to the European Commission of Human Rights. Their complaint was about <sup>many</sup> ~~a large number of~~ aspects of their treatment in prison. All but two points in the complaint were declared inadmissible by the Commission, in June 1980, as being either manifestly ill-founded or incompatible with the Convention.

The two points outstanding related to interference with prisoners' correspondence (Article 8) and the duty under the Convention (Article 13) to provide an effective remedy before a national authority for alleged violation of Convention rights. These two points were adjourned for later consideration. So far as Article 13 is concerned, the position we have hitherto taken is that the complaint is not only misconceived in substance but should also be rejected as inadmissible because it relates to alleged violations of the Convention which the Commission has already rejected.

/In

SECRET

SECRET

In response to suggestions that the Commission should play a positive role in helping to defuse the situation, one of its Members floated with us the idea that we should concede admissibility on Article 13 in order to enable the Commission to continue its formal procedures under the Convention. Because of the disadvantages which such a course might have had in this and other cases, we rejected that proposal. The Commission then suggested a different approach in which the arguments which we would wish to urge on the admissibility point could be advanced, as substantive objections of law, when the Commission had completed its investigation of the substance of the case.

While it was recognised that this course would deprive us of the chance of continuing to argue that the whole case on Article 13 should be knocked out at this initial stage, the assessment was that this was not of major significance. Our arguments would be as valid and effective if deployed at the later stage as if they were separately deployed as arguments on admissibility. The

SECRET

/Commission

SECRET

Commission had already indicated that it would deal with admissibility considerations together with the merits, and our chance of separating <sup>them</sup> was therefore always questionable. Nor should we be setting a precedent which could be used to our disadvantage in other cases.

In the light of this assessment it was decided that there was no need on legal grounds to reject the Commission's later proposal if its acceptance would have political advantages. Following a decision that there were indeed such advantages, the Commission was notified that "Exceptionally, while the UK maintained its objections to the interpretation placed upon Article 13, read alone or together with other Articles, it does not insist that these issues be resolved at the admissibility stage." We were subsequently informed that the Commission formally declared the complaint on Article 13 admissible.

SECRET

E.R.

SECRET

ANNEX B

STATEMENT BY HMG

During 1978, four of the protesting prisoners in the Maze brought certain complaints before the European Commission<sup>g m</sup> of Human Rights.

The protesters in the Maze are claiming "political status", a claim which finds expression in what are known as the "five demands".

Although the five demands as now formulated do not correspond precisely with the complaints made, their substance was covered by those complaints, and those complaints - save for the complaint relating to interference with correspondence under Article 8 which was adjourned - were considered by the Commission last year. In the Commission's Partial Decision of June 1980 they were rejected as inadmissible because they were either "manifestly ill-founded" or otherwise incompatible with the Convention. As regards prisoners' correspondence all conforming prisoners in fact get letters and parcels (and visits) equal to or even beyond what is demanded.

In addition to the Article 8 complaint referred to above, a complaint under Article 13 - about the availability of an "effective remedy before a national authority" *is necessary if violation of rights is found to exist in the Convention.* - (which does not figure in the five demands) was also adjourned. The Commission is now proceeding, under the terms of the Convention, to examine the ~~substance of these two~~ remaining complaints ~~with the representatives of the parties,~~ and to put itself at the disposal of the parties "with a view to securing a friendly settlement on the basis of respect for human rights as defined in the Convention".

The Government will of course facilitate the work of the Commission *examining the complaints - including the facts.* in its task under the Convention. However, it ~~stands firm on its~~ *remains* refusal to concede the five demands, and is prepared if necessary to ~~defend~~ *justify* its position before the ~~Committee~~ *Committee* of Ministers or the European Court of Human Rights.

SECRET



10 DOWNING STREET

PRIME MINISTER

15/5/81

Michael Mates has now replied to Stephen Ross' letter, about an All-Party initiative to consider the problems at the Maze. He has suggested that an All-Party Group should have a session with Humphrey Atkins before considering what further action they might take.

MAD

18 May, 1981

Ireland

R H

BF 18/5/81

18 May, 1981

We spoke this morning about the telegram from Father Brian McCreesh received by the Prime Minister over the weekend.

As I told you, the Prime Minister would like to release her reply to Father McCreesh today. I enclose a copy of the telegram. You have the drafting in hand.

M: A. PATTISON

S Boys-Smith, Esq  
Northern Ireland Office

67.

889269 PO SX G  
SQ TRC TELEGRAM G

171012  
ZCZC TXE3729 LBGL67 JLBL2L1 BECL46 PFO004 0302LOND  
GBXX CO GBBE 08L  
BELFAST TF 8L 17 0934 PAGE 1/50

PRIME MINISTER 10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1

DEAR MRS THATCHER

MY BROTHER RAYMOND MCCREESH IS A PRISONER IN HMP MAZE  
FOR FOUR YEARS HE HAS GONE WITHOUT CLOTHES WITHOUT VISITS  
WITHOUT WASHING. HE HAS BEEN LOCKED-UP 24 HOURS A DAY.  
HE HAS NOW GONE WITHOUT FOOD FOR 57 DAYS. ALL HE HAS

~~COL 10 LOCKED-UP 24 57 DAYS.~~

LBGL67 JLBL2L1 PRI PAGE 2/34

LEFT IS HIS PRIDE AS AN IRISHMAN AND HIS LOYALTY TO HIS FELLOW  
PRISONERS LIVING AND DEAD. I BEG YOU TO RESPECT HIS DIGNITY  
AND SAVE HIM.  
FATHER BRIAN MCCREESH PAROCHIAL HOUSE  
COAL ISLAND CO. TYRONE

NNNN  
889269 PO SX G  
SQ TRC TELEGRAM GT





31614 ARCONS GM

DER

DER

DER

31614 CAPO EI

27582 CABOFF G

FROM: THE PRIME MINISTER, 10 DOWNING ST., LONDON.

TO: THE MOST REVEREND TOMAS O FIAICH, ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TELEGRAM OF 13 MAY ABOUT THE HUNGER STRIKE AT THE MAZE PRISON. I UNDERSTAND YOUR CONCERN. I FULLY SHARE IT.

THE GOVERNMENT HAVE REPEATEDLY MADE CLEAR HOW MUCH THEY REGRET THE LOSS OF LIFE THROUGH ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND. THE GOVERNMENT IS NOT THE INFLEXIBLE PARTY IN THIS ISSUE. THE PROVISIONAL IRA, AT WHOSE BEHEST THE HUNGER STRIKE IS TAKING PLACE, HAVE STATED AND RESTATED FROM THE BEGINNING THAT THEY WOULD CALL OFF THE STRIKE ONLY IF THE GOVERNMENT WERE TO CONCEDE ALL FIVE OF THEIR DEMANDS. WHAT THEY WANT IS NOT PRISON REFORMS, BUT A SPECIAL DIFFERENT STATUS FOR SOME PRISONERS. THIS THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT CONCEDE, SINCE IT WOULD ENCOURAGE FURTHER BLACKMAIL AND SUPPORT FOR TERRORISM. WE CANNOT TREAT PERSONS CONVICTED OF CRIMINAL OFFENCES AS PRISONERS OF WAR, WHICH IS WHAT THEY WANT.

IN CONTRAST, THE GOVERNMENT HAD DEMONSTRATED FLEXIBILITY IN A NUMBER OF WAYS. WE INTRODUCED IMPORTANT AND HUMANE CHANGES IN THE PRISON REGIME LAST YEAR. WE TOOK THE INITIATIVE TO DE-ESCALATE THE DIRTY PROTEST IN JANUARY, AND RESPONDED PROMPTLY TO THE ENDING OF THE DIRTY PROTEST IN MARCH, CUTTING THE RATE OF LOSS OF REMISSION BY HALF. WE ALLOWED THE THREE DUBLIN TD'S, THE ECHR REPRESENTATIVES AND THE POPE'S REPRESENTATIVE TO VISIT THE MAZE IN THE HOPE THAT THEY COULD FIND SOME WAY TO PERSUADE MR SANDS AND THE OTHER HUNGER STRIKERS TO CEASE THEIR ACTION. I HOPE THE REMAINING HUNGER STRIKERS WILL EVEN NOW RESPOND TO THE POPE'S MESSAGE.

YOU MAKE A NUMBER OF POINTS ABOUT THE PRISON POPULATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND. I AM VERY AWARE OF THEM, AS IS THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND. WE ARE COMMITTED TO MAINTAINING AN ENLIGHTENED AND HUMANITARIAN PRISON REGIME, AND I BELIEVE WE DO SO. WE ARE READY TO LISTEN TO REPRESENTATIONS FROM RESPONSIBLE QUARTERS - INCLUDING FOR EXAMPLE THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS - ON ALL ASPECTS OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL CONFORMING PRISONERS: BUT WE CANNOT YIELD ON THE ISSUE OF POLITICAL JUSTIFICATION FOR MURDER AND VIOLENCE AND OF PRISONER OF WAR STATUS FOR THOSE WHO COMMIT SUCH CRIMES.

LIKE YOU, I AM ANXIOUS TO AVOID ALL FURTHER NEEDLESS DEATHS IN NORTHERN IRELAND FROM WHATEVER PART OF THE COMMUNITY. YOU IN PARTICULAR WILL I AM SURE APPRECIATE THE HEAVY LOAD MY COLLEAGUES AND I BEAR IN DISCHARGING OUR RESPONSIBILITIES. BUT THE SOLUTION DOES NOT LIE IN OUR HANDS. IT LIES WITH THE HUNGER STRIKERS THEMSELVES, THEIR FAMILIES AND ADVISERS. MORE DIRECTLY, IT LIES WITH THE LEADERS OF THE PROVISIONAL IRA, WHO HAVE TAKEN A COLD-BLOODED DECISION THAT THE UNFORTUNATE MEN NOW FASTING IN PRISON ARE OF MORE USE TO THEM DEAD THAN ALIVE. THIS SEEMS TO ME THE MOST IMMORAL AND INFLEXIBLE DECISION ANYONE COULD TAKE.

SINCE YOU RELEASED YOUR TELEGRAM TO THE PRESS, I AM SURE YOU WILL NOT MIND MY PUBLISHING THIS REPLY.

NNNN

31614 CAPO EI

27582 CABOFF G

100  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65  
66  
67  
68  
69  
70  
71  
72  
73  
74  
75  
76  
77  
78  
79  
80  
81  
82  
83  
84  
85  
86  
87  
88  
89  
90  
91  
92  
93  
94  
95  
96  
97  
98  
99  
100



*with the  
compliments of*

Michael Mates

HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

From: Michael Mates, M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

15th May, 1981.

Dear Stephen,

Thank you for your letter of 11th May about the hunger strike at the Maze Prison.

I share your support for the Government's firm stand on the question of political status. It is an issue of principle which cannot be conceded. I believe that the Government enjoys widespread support from responsible quarters throughout the western world who understand the threat posed by terrorism and the dangers of giving way to violence. Indeed no one can speak from more experience than you yourself with regard to the need to maintain a disciplined prison regime with your particular constituency interest.

Nevertheless I agree that we must leave no stone unturned in trying to find a way to resolve the present situation. As Chairman of the All-Party Group, I would of course be happy to approach the Secretary of State and I am sure we would get a helpful response.

Speaking for myself, I do not believe it would be proper for our Group to make an approach to the Government on behalf of senior representatives of the main political parties in Ulster as you suggest. Our function is a Parliamentary one and any approach should properly be confined to Members of this House.

I must add too that I am doubtful that any visit by us at this time would be of any help. You will recall that Don Concannon visited the Maze before the death of Sands and was told unequivocally by the prisoners themselves that the hunger strike would not stop until all demands for political status had been met, and you and I are agreed that it would be impossible for any Government to meet these demands.



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

If you thought it would be helpful, I would suggest that we invite a small group of our colleagues who take a close interest in the affairs of Northern Ireland to meet the Secretary of State and some of his officials for an up to date briefing of the situation with regard to the hunger strike and the Government's thoughts as to how to cope with any potential developments. If we then thought that a visit such as you suggest might produce concrete results, we could consider making a further approach.

*Yours ever*

*Michael Meehan*

Stephen Ross Esq., M.P.,  
House of Commons,  
London, S.W.1.

8/6

MASSACHUSETTS

H/Representatives

FILE

VLS



cc FCO  
PC Cross Office

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

18 May 1981

I enclose two telegrams and a letter to the Prime Minister about the situation in Northern Ireland. One of the telegrams is from Tom Hayden and Jane Fonda, the other from the Secretary of State, Western Australia. The letter is from the Majority Leader of the Massachusetts House of Representatives.

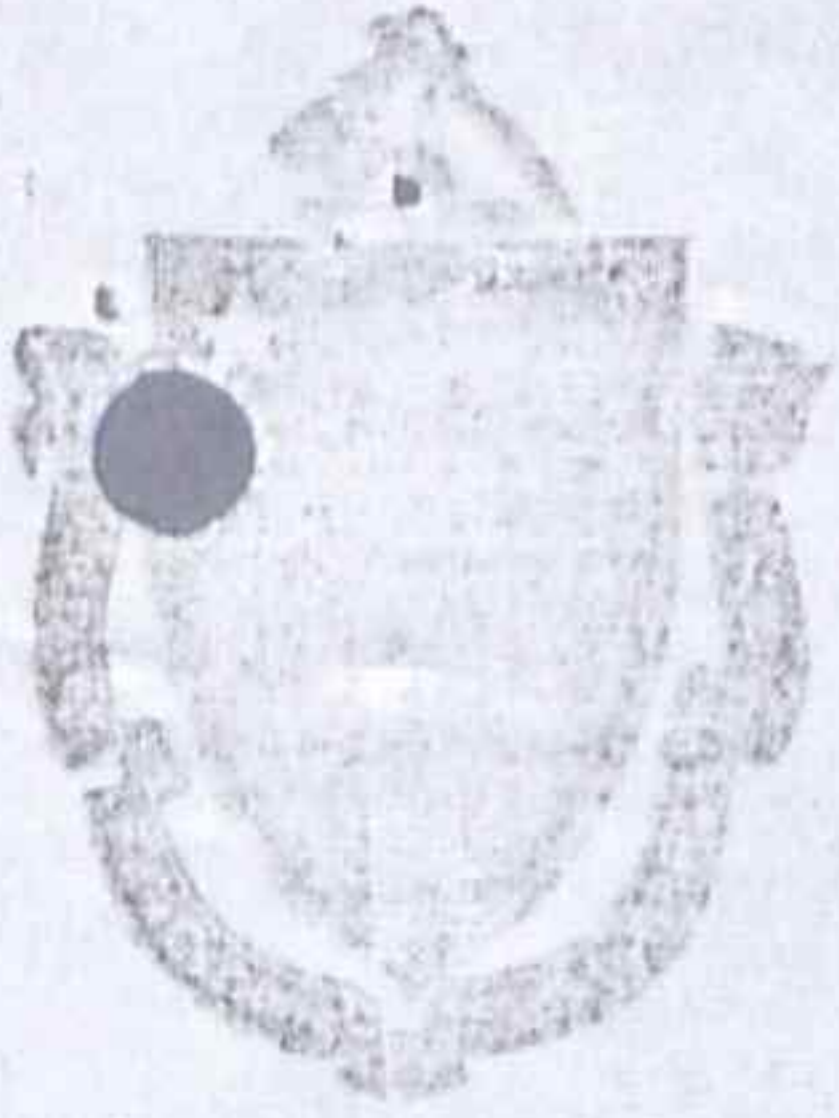
I should be grateful if you would arrange for these messages to receive suitable replies, with a copy to us for our records.

I am copying this letter to Roderic Lyne (Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

W. F. S. RICKETT

Mike Hopkins, Esq.,  
Northern Ireland Office.

ls



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

House of Representatives  
Assistant Majority Leader  
State House, Boston

MARIE E. HOWE  
31st MIDDLESEX DISTRICT  
19 PEMBROKE STREET  
SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

May 12, 1981

R16

Committee on Rules,  
Commerce and Labor  
and Member of  
John F. Kennedy  
Memorial Commission

The Honorable Margaret Thatcher  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
London, England

Dear Prime Minister Thatcher,

I am appealing to you in the name of common decency to be flexible in your position with the prisoners of war in British occupied Ireland. We have now lost two brave Irishmen in your notorious Long Kesh concentration camp. In the name of God grant them their five demands!

The entire world is well aware of the intransigent position of your Government regarding this deplorable situation.

I am sure that you and your Government realize it is a situation that will not go away, and the more inflexible your Government becomes, the more diligent people like me will work to drive your Government out of Ireland.

I am enclosing a Resolution adopted unanimously by the one hundred and sixty member Massachusetts Legislature representing a population of eight million Massachusetts citizens taking note of the tragic death of Bobby Sands, a duly elected member of your Parliament and a committed Irish Nationalist.

Also, please note in the Resolution that the more your Government resists freedom and independence for Irish men and women, the more militant freedom loving Americans will become; as further demonstrated in the Massachusetts Resolution that your Government prefers bullets to the ballot box and "vindicating the Irish Republican Army in its claim that the resolution of political differences by recourse to arms is compelled."

It is important that you fully realize how devastating your inflexibility on the cause of Irish Freedom has become. Your Government can no longer get away with discrimination, torture and vilifying the Irish Republican Army.

Please note that the Massachusetts Legislature further stated in its Resolution that we "condemn the Government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher for its insensitivity to the value of human life and the real issues of Ireland's divisive struggle, and wholeheartedly supports the ultimate objectives of the IRA."

Ms. Margaret Thatcher  
a 2  
May 12, 1981

It is my wish that you will grant the five demands and that you will  
move speedily for a total British withdrawal from Ulster.

Sincerely yours,

*Marie Howe*

MARIE E. HOWE  
State Representative

sh

IN THE YEAR ONE THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-ONE

RESOLUTIONS ON THE DEATH OF THE RIGHT HONORABLE ROBERT SANDS,  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, PRISONER OF WAR  
AND IRISH NATIONALIST.

WHEREAS, THE MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES HAS LEARNED WITH DEEP REGRET AND GRIM FOREBODING OF THE TRAGIC DEATH OF BOBBY SANDS, M.P. AND COMMITTED IRISH NATIONALIST; AND

WHEREAS, JUST AS A RESISTER OF FASCISM ONCE WROTE THAT "A MAN'S MORAL WORTH IS ESTABLISHED ONLY AT THAT POINT WHERE HE IS PREPARED TO GIVE HIS LIFE FOR HIS CONVICTIONS", BOBBY SANDS' SELFLESS ACT OF CONSCIENCE, A SIXTY-SIX DAY HUNGER STRIKE IN SUPPORT OF IRA PRISONER DEMANDS FOR POLITICAL RECOGNITION BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, HAS ONCE AGAIN DEMONSTRATED TO THE WORLD THAT IRISH PATRIOTS, THE SPIRITUAL LEGATEES AND PRESERVERS OF IRELAND'S ANCIENT TRADITION OF NATIONHOOD, WILL ENDURE AND NEVER YIELD TO THE YOKE OF A TYRANNICAL, OCCUPYING FOREIGN POWER; AND

WHEREAS, DEFIANTLY SUPPORTED IN HIS STRUGGLE BY THE PEOPLE WHO ELECTED HIM TO PARLIAMENT YET PRECLUDED BY A HOSTILE GOVERNMENT FROM TAKING HIS SEAT, BOBBY SANDS, M.P. HAS DEMONSTRATED THE APPARENT FUTILITY OF RESORTING TO THE "SYSTEM" TO ADDRESS ONE'S GRIEVANCES IN AN UNDEMOCRATIC "NORTHERN IRELAND", THEREBY VINDICATING THE IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY IN ITS CLAIM THAT RESOLUTION OF POLITICAL DIFFERENCES BY RECOURSE TO ARMS IS COMPELLED; AND

WHEREAS, KEEPING FAITH WITH GENERATIONS OF IRISH MARTYRS WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES FOR THE CHERISHED DREAM OF A UNITED IRELAND, THE IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY WILL CONTINUE TO PURSUE THE NATIONAL GOAL AND ULTIMATELY PREVAIL WITH THE UNFLAGGING SUPPORT OF A PERCEPTIVE AND SYMPATHETIC WORLD COMMUNITY; THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, THAT THE MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF THE COMMONWEALTH, HEREBY EXTENDS TO THE FAMILY OF THE LATE AND HEROIC BOBBY SANDS ITS HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES IN THE HOUR OF THEIR BEREAVEMENT, CONDEMNS THE GOVERNMENT OF PRIME MINISTER MARGARET THATCHER FOR ITS INSENSITIVITY TO THE VALUE OF HUMAN LIFE AND THE REAL ISSUES OF IRELAND'S DIVISIVE STRUGGLE, AND WHOLEHEARTEDLY SUPPORTS THE ULTIMATE OBJECTIVES OF THE IRA; AND BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, THAT A COPY OF THESE RESOLUTIONS BE FORWARDED BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE FAMILY OF THE LATE BOBBY SANDS, M.P., P.O.W.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, ADOPTED, MAY 7, 1981.

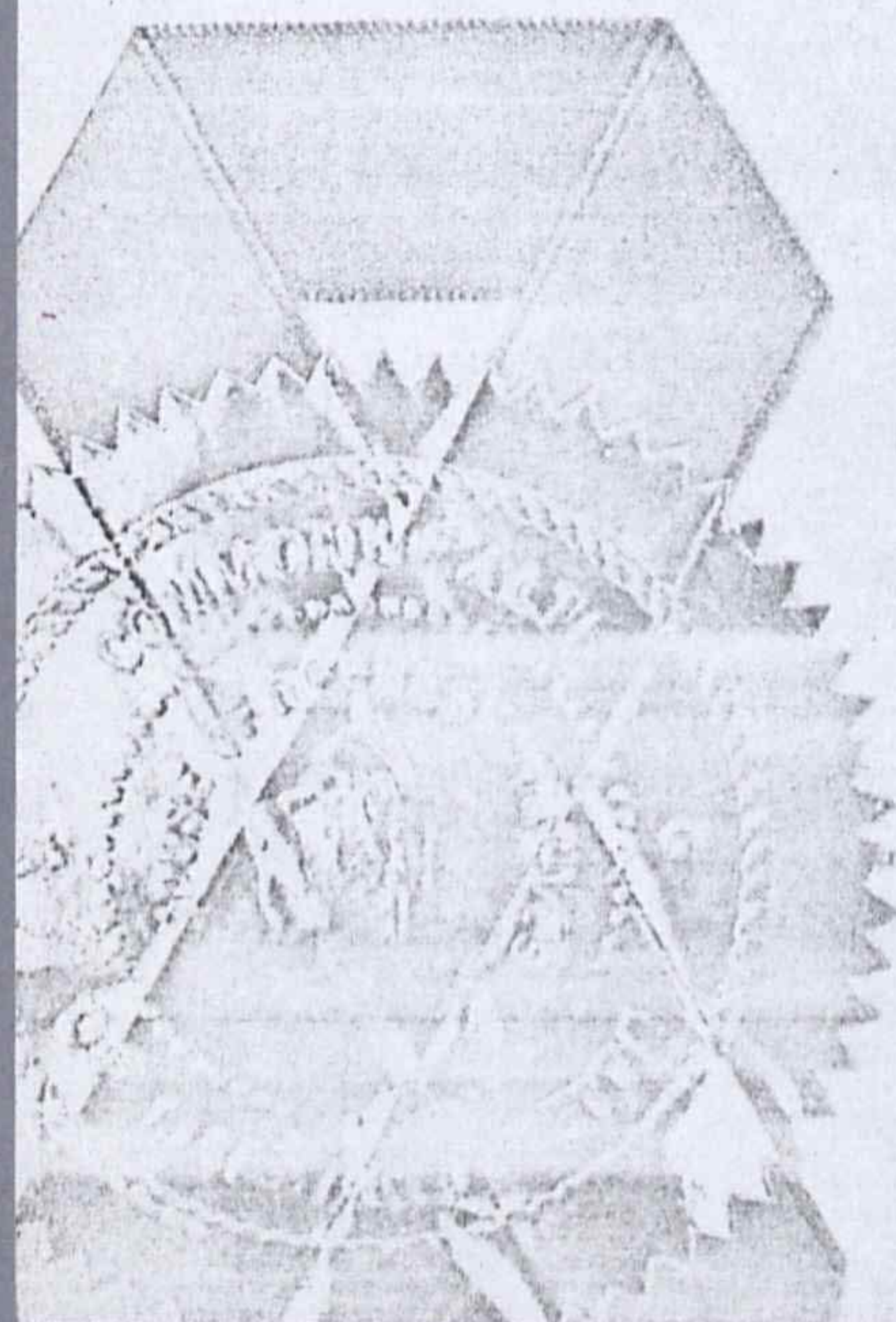
*Thomas W. McLee*  
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

*Wallace C. Mills*  
CLERK OF THE HOUSE

OFFERED BY:

*Marie C. Howe*  
REPRESENTATIVE MARIE ELIZABETH HOWE

*Charles R. Doyle*  
REPRESENTATIVE CHARLES ROBERT DOYLE





From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

Copy No 1 of 1

3A



SECRET

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE

GREAT GEORGE STREET,

(2)

LONDON SW1P 3AJ

Michael Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street  
S W 1

You may like to see  
this over the weekend. It is

for discussion on

15 May 1981

Wednesday:

Prime Minister

Dear Michael,

Paul  
[Signature]

PRISON PROTESTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

A meeting has been arranged for 6 pm this  
coming Wednesday 20 May to discuss the handling  
of the prison protests in Northern Ireland.

..... I attach a paper for that purpose.

Copies of this letter and its enclosure go to  
John Halliday, Home Office, Roderick Lyne and  
Adam Wood, (FCO), Brian Norbury, MOD, Jim  
Nursaw, Law Officers Department and David Wright,  
Cabinet Office.

[Signature]

S BOYS SMITH

SECRET

SD

## THE PRISON PROTESTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland

1. We have reached a critical point on our handling of the prison protests in Northern Ireland and I seek my colleagues' views on the way forward.

The Point of the Protests

2. The Northern Ireland prison population is unique. Out of 1850 convicted male prisoners, about 1,000 were convicted when still young of terrorist offences for which they are serving long sentences. Of these prisoners the Republicans in particular display a remarkable sense of common identity and purpose. They retain within the prison a good deal of control over many of their number through an effective military-style command structure. 450 of them are engaged in some form of protest in pursuit of a regime which (a) would be different from that applicable to "ordinary" prisoners, and more appropriate to prisoners of war; and (b) would confer upon them control over their own lives in prison (cf the 330 men still enjoying "special category" status in the Maze). Such a regime would also (c), by implication, offer the prospect of amnesty - for which there are precedents in Northern Ireland - when the "war" was over. It is this, not just more humanitarian prison conditions, that "political status" is all about.

Attitudes -(i) PIRA and Catholic

3. The protests in the prison affect the situation in the outside community. Thus:

- (a) the Provisionals feel they cannot abandon the armed struggle (terrorism) until their men have achieved an acceptable regime;

- (b) many members of the Catholic community tend, emotionally, to identify with the "boys behind the wire". The longer the conflict in the prison lasts, the greater the danger of alienation; and
- (c) prisoners - ~~the~~ majority Catholic - are under the control of, largely, Protestant prison officers - which reinforces the feeling at (b) and is a source of instability.

(ii) Protestants.

4. For the Protestant community, HMG's handling of the prisons is seen as a measure of its resolve against the IRA. Concessions to Republican pressure would be interpreted as weakness and would have consequences for the security situation.

(iii) Protesters.

5. The main body of the protesters have lowered the level of their protest (from "dirty" to "no clothes/no work"). Only they can decide their degree of conformity; the authorities can only respond with corresponding punishment (loss of remission and/or other privileges). It is too soon to tell whether the protesters are as they claimed seeking only to focus attention on the hunger strike or are also seeking to establish themselves in the most comfortable available regime. There is evidence to support the latter. Protesters and hunger strikers (and their families) are at present under firm PIRA control.

Government's Objectives

6. The Government's aim is to defeat terrorism and return Northern Ireland to normality. For the prisons problem this must mean:

- (i) refusing "political status": (unthinkable - to do so would give a great fillip to PIRA);

- (ii) getting terrorists under lock and key, and keeping them there;
- (iii) minimising Catholic community identification with the hunger strikers (so always adopt policies that show care and concern for the Catholics and for the well-being of the prisoners);
- (iv) exploring any way short of conceding their demands which would get the hunger strikers and protesters to give up, or, failing that, put the pressure of opinion against them, not HMG.

A longer term problem - "Special Category"

7. Present problems apart, the Northern Ireland prison issue will come to a head again in a year from now. With the opening of the new prison at Maghaberry in late 1982, there will, for the first time, be sufficient cellular accommodation to house the Special Category prisoners in the Maze. By then some review of the prison regime will be needed.

The Dangers of Confrontation

8. We know that PIRA and the protesters are at the moment determined to settle for nothing less than "political status" which they themselves have elaborated into five demands: marginal concessions will not resolve the issue. They believe they will win, because of the pressures that will build up on the Government, and are ready for a sustained campaign.

9. There are two problems here for the Government if the hunger strikers hold out:

- (a) It would be wrong to assume that, with each successive death, community reaction will continue to diminish. While the Security Forces (SF) are confident that they can contain the street disturbances, every incident carries the risk of a breakdown (local, and perhaps under great provocation) of SF restraint or/a simple accident (such as the death of an innocent local resident). This could radically affect public opinion on both sides of the community divide - and overseas.
- (b) However sound and defensible the refusal to concede "political status", the Government risks a continuing adverse world - and perhaps British - reaction as hunger strikers continue to die. Something, the world will say, must be wrong if prisoners in one of HM Prisons keep committing suicide, and it is on HMG that pressure will come to "put it right".

#### The Government's Present Position

10. The Government refuses "political status" and has widespread support. It refuses the five demands because taken together they give expression to "political status". It is committed to a humanitarian prison regime and to improving it. But there are two principles it cannot concede:

- (i) There can be no differentiation of treatment for a particular group of prisoners, because that would recognise that crime can have a political justification, a proposition which is morally repugnant.
- (ii) The prison regime must be under the control of the authorities, not the prisoners.

11. Within those limits changes (necessarily to all prisoners) have already been made and others are possible - eg freedom for male prisoners to wear their own clothes all day as women prisoners do already. Others are ruled out - eg freedom to decide what, if any, work to do and when to take association - because they would offend the need to keep control. Given present Provisional attitudes no possible changes would be acceptable to HMG on these criteria and have any hope of ending the strike.

The European Commission of Human Rights (ECHR)

12. As my colleagues will be aware from the press, hopes have been expressed in a number of quarters that the ECHR might be re-involved in the Maze problem. I have gone into the possibilities with some care, and, as a result of a suggestion by the Commission, a way to do this has been found. When, last June, the Commission issued a Partial Decision on what is known as "the Maze case" (four protesters in the prison having lodged complaints that HMG was in breach of the Convention), two issues were left unsettled. On one of these (relating to the alleged lack of "an effective remedy before a national authority") progress has been held up by legal arguments about admissibility. Without conceding anything of legal significance to HMG on this, a formula has been devised to skirt round that hurdle, so that the Commission can now begin substantive work on the complaint. I have indicated to the Commission that HMG is content with the course proposed.

13. I would not wish too much hope to be placed on this move - the legal constraints within which the Commission will have to work are narrow, and it is not yet clear how close to the real problems in the Maze they will be able to get. But their Partial Decision

SECRET

.R.

of last year did include some obiter dicta going beyond their strict remit under the Convention, and it may be that this may happen again. I do not expect this latest move to persuade the hunger strikers to give up, but it could prove helpful to us in the propaganda battle.

The coming weeks

14. We face a testing time. Within the next week two more hunger strikers are likely to die - which means two more funerals to provide publicity for the Provisionals. Further SF or civilian deaths must remain a continuing possibility. On 20 May the District Council elections in Northern Ireland will take place, after which tension will mount again as the time approaches, in early July, for the fifth hunger striker to reach a critical point. By then we are into the period leading up to the parliamentary debate on the renewal of both the Emergency Powers and the Constitution Acts, which must take place in late June. On that occasion I shall be expected to say something about the Government's attitude to further political development in the Province, as well as making clear our position on the prisons problem and the developing security situation.

15. Throughout all this period the SF will be under great pressure, and the risks referred to in paragraph 8(a) above will remain and perhaps intensify. Soldiers and policemen can do 12-hour duties for a short period without difficulty; but as the period lengthens into weeks the strains become greater and the risks higher.

16. Our posture during this time must, I suggest, be broadly as follows:

SECRET

- (i) on the prisons we stand rock-firm on "political status", while remaining committed to a humanitarian and progressive regime and a willingness to facilitate the ECHR in its work in every possible way;
- (ii) on security we remain committed to combatting terrorism through the rule of law, with the police in the lead, fully supported by the Army. We are likely to have to give further thought to the numbers and deployment of troops as the situation develops;
- (iii) on political development, we should make it clear that we still wish to find an acceptable way of moving towards the transfer of responsibility to locally elected representatives for a wide range of powers; and after the District Council elections I would propose to invite all the local parties to come and talk to me about how we might best proceed.

#### Publicity

17. Through and alongside every aspect of our problems we must give a high place to the waging of the propaganda battle. We cannot afford for one moment to relax our efforts, at home and overseas, to get public opinion on to our side. If we are accused of inflexibility in the prisons, we must show how flexible we have in fact been and how we are standing firm only on issues/<sup>on</sup> which no responsible government faced with a terrorist threat - any terrorist threat - could give way. We must ensure that the remarkable restraint of the SF in face of constant provocation is given its due. We must see to it that our position on political development, on the constitutional guarantee, on the Dublin talks, is more widely understood.



18. To this end I propose to set up an informal group of officials from the Departments most closely concerned which can meet frequently and regularly in London (in parallel to a local operational group already meeting daily in Belfast) to monitor development and prospective events and deal with the propaganda campaign.

Conclusion

19. I should be glad to know that my colleagues agree with the approach and general posture set out in this paper.

FILE

VLB

15 May 1981

I enclose for your records a copy of the message which was sent by the Prime Minister to Cardinal O Fiaich this afternoon in reply to the Cardinal's telegram of 13 May.

I am sending copies of this letter and enclosure to Roderic Lyne (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

MICHAEL ALEXANDER

Roy Harrington, Esq.,  
Northern Ireland Office.



## 10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

Thank you for your telegram of 13 May about the hunger strike at the Maze Prison. I understand your concern. I fully share it.

The Government have repeatedly made clear how much they regret the loss of life through all forms of violence in Northern Ireland. The Government is not the inflexible party in this issue. The Provisional IRA, at whose behest the hunger strike is taking place, have stated and restated from the beginning that they would call off the strike only if the Government were to concede all five of their demands. What they want is not prison reforms, but a special different status for some prisoners. This the Government cannot concede, since it would encourage further blackmail and support for terrorism. We cannot treat persons convicted of criminal offences as prisoners of war, which is what they want.

In contrast, the Government had demonstrated flexibility in a number of ways. We introduced important and humane changes in the prison regime last year. We took the initiative to de-escalate the dirty protest in January, and responded promptly to the ending of the dirty protest in March, cutting the rate of loss of remission by half. We allowed the three Dublin TDs, the ECHR representatives and the Pope's representative to visit the Maze in the hope that they could find some way

/to persuade

to persuade Mr. Sands and the other hunger strikers to cease their action. I hope the remaining hunger strikers will even now respond to the Pope's message.

You make a number of points about the prison population in Northern Ireland. I am very aware of them, as is the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. We are committed to maintaining an enlightened and humanitarian prison regime, and I believe we do so. We are ready to listen to representations from responsible quarters - including for example the European Commission on Human Rights - on all aspects of the environment for all conforming prisoners: but we cannot yield on the issue of political justification for murder and violence and of prisoner of war status for those who commit such crimes.

Like you, I am anxious to avoid all further needless deaths in Northern Ireland from whatever part of the community. You in particular will I am sure appreciate the heavy load my colleagues and I bear in discharging our responsibilities. But the solution does not lie in our hands. It lies with the hunger strikers themselves, their families and advisers. More directly, it lies with the leaders of the Provisional IRA, who have taken a cold-blooded decision that the unfortunate men now fasting in prison are of more use to them dead than alive. This seems to me the most immoral and inflexible decision anyone could take.

Since you released your telegram to the press, I am sure you will not mind my publishing this reply.

The Most Reverend Tomas O Fiaich, Archbishop of Armagh

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



**CONFIDENTIAL**

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,  
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

Michael Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street  
Whitehall  
London  
S W 1

(2)

*Primi Minister*

15 May 1981

*Primi*

*Dear Michael,*

*MS*

MAZE PROTESTORS: RE-INVOLVEMENT AT THE  
EUROPEAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

This is to confirm the message that I gave you yesterday evening.

As you know there has in recent days been growing and widespread pressure for the Commission to be involved by some means or other in an attempt to resolve the hunger strike at The Maze. HMG's position has been a sympathetic one, and we have been exploring, in consultation with the FCO and (privately) the Commission itself, means by which the Commission's involvement might come about. The Irish have also been active in this respect. One possibility canvassed was that the Commission might proceed with the adjourned case brought against HMG by four protesting prisoners in The Maze. The position with regard to this case is that most of the protestors' grounds of complaint were found by the Commission in its Partial Decision of June 1980 to be inadmissible. However at that time the Commission adjourned for further consideration the complaint under Article 13 that the prisoners had no "effective remedy before a national authority". HMG has argued that this complaint is not admissible under the terms of the Convention, and the Commission has been awaiting the observations of the four applicants on the material which the Government had sent in supporting its argument.

The proposition that we originally considered was that HMG might concede admissibility, so that the Commission could proceed forthwith to deal with the substance of the complaint. When the idea was initially put to us in that form we were not immediately attracted to it, because there were uncertainties about the possible wider legal implications, for a number of other important cases

.... /

**CONFIDENTIAL**

.../  
**CONFIDENTIAL**

before the Commission and Court of Human Rights, of our conceding admissibility, as well as doubt whether this was the best and most direct way of involving the Commission in the situation. However, late yesterday afternoon we heard from the Commission that they were ready to proceed on a rather different basis, namely (in the words of the Commission's suggested formula) that "exceptionally while the UK maintained its objections to the interpretation placed upon Article 13 read alone or together with other Articles, it does not insist that these issues be resolved at the admissibility stage". It also became apparent that the Irish knew of the Commission's proposal and were pressing us to go along with it.

Against this background we rapidly reviewed the pros and cons of accepting the Commission's proposal. Officials of the Law Officers' Department confirmed that if as a matter of policy we wished to do so there was no overriding legal impediment, given the protection of the formula suggested by the Commission. In these circumstances my Secretary of State, with FCO concurrence, decided that we should accede to the Commission's proposal; and the Commission were so informed.

The considerations that weighed with Mr Atkins were:

- (i) the Commission had taken the initiative, and evidently believes that it is a way ahead;
- (ii) the Irish were anxious for it to be pursued and, had we declined to co-operate, would have made much of our refusal, to the grave disadvantage of our general stance of co-operation with the Commission;
- (iii) the formula devised by the Commission went much of the way to assuaging anxiety regarding the consequences of our conceding admissibility.

How far the Commission can now take the case, and to what effect, it is too early to say. We understand that they will proceed, according to normal procedure, by approaching both parties with a view to a "friendly settlement" (Article 28). It may be that the Commission's activities, though nominally related only to Article 13, will facilitate a friendly settlement which would embrace substantive questions of prison regime. We also wait to see whether they can base upon them a request to visit the Maze; if so, we shall of course facilitate it.

To sum up, this is not the ideal basis for the Commission's involvement. But the Commission have proposed it and our advantage clearly lies in accepting it. At worst it could prove itself inadequate and run into the sand. If it does, the embarrassment will not be primarily ours, and other options - such as they are - will not have been foreclosed.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Francis Richards (FCO), John Halliday (Home Office), Henry Steele (Law Officers' Department) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

**CONFIDENTIAL**

*Henry Steele*

S M BOYS SMITH



Ireland

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

15 May 1981

Dear Michael,

kg  
RMB

The Hunger Strike

Thank you for your letter of 12 May about Delhi telegram number 461 which requested further guidance on the background to Sands' arrest and conviction.

Although Delhi have received several Briefs on Northern Ireland, they unfortunately did not receive the Guidance telegram containing details of Sands' trial which went to posts most likely to face enquiries on the hunger strike. We respond to such specific requests for information immediately.

All posts are now receiving up-to-date background on the situation.

I am sending copies of this letter to Roy Harrington (Northern Ireland Office) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

yours ever  
Rodric Lyne

(R M J Lyne)  
Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL



JS  
Ireland

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

15 May 1981

NORTHERN IRELAND

I enclose records of the Prime Minister's recent conversations with Mr. John Hume, Mr. James Molyneaux and with the Leader of the Opposition. I should be grateful if the record of the conversation with Mr. Foot could be given a particularly limited distribution.

I am copying this letter, and its enclosures, to Roderic Lyne (FCO) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

MA

Roy Harrington, Esq.,  
Northern Ireland Office.





CONFIDENTIAL

- 2 -

What was at issue, under the latter heading, was the prisoners' activities before breakfast and at lunchtime.

As evidence for his assertion that concessions on clothing and freedom of association would end the hunger strike, Mr. Hume cited his contacts with the hunger strikers before Christmas; a message from a clergyman connected with the hunger strikers' families to the effect that action along the lines Mr. Hume had been advocating would "bring a definite response from the prisoners"; and a conversation he had had the previous day with Mr. Gerry Adams. Mr. Adams had asked what Mr. Hume would be proposing and, on being told <sup>had said</sup> that if the "substance" of the five points was granted, the hunger strikers would call off their protest. On being accused by Mr. Hume of always asking for more, Mr. Adams had said that the PIRA would make no demands beyond those already made as a price for ending the hunger strike. Mr. Adams had added that the PIRA were not interested in the suggestion that the European Commission on Human Rights might offer a way to end the hunger strike. He had added that Mr. Hume should not try to be seen to be negotiating on behalf of the prisoners. He had said, finally, that it was of no concern to the PIRA how we described any concession we made.

Mr. Hume said that on the basis of his conversation with Mr. Adams, and of the other two pieces of "evidence" he had cited, he was confident that action along the lines which he had proposed would do the trick. He was not seeking any credit from the affair. The Government could simply announce that it was renewing its efforts to implement the proposals made before Christmas with one or two additional features. There need be no intermediary or other involvement.

The Prime Minister pointed out that Sands, Hughes and Hughes' brother, An Phoblacht and indeed Adams, as reported by Mr. Hume, were all asking that the five demands should be met in full.

/ She resented

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 3 -

She resented the accusation that it was the Government who were being inflexible. Everything recommended by the Commission on Human Rights in its 1980 Report had been implemented. And beyond that the decision to issue civilian clothing to conforming prisoners had been made. We had incurred criticism for that decision. It now formed part of what was a particularly humane régime. The media had been into the Maze more than once and had been able to find nothing to criticise in the facilities. What the prisoners made of those facilities was, of course, their business.

Contrary to Mr. Hume's assertion, the Government were not on a hook. Sands and Hughes had both been guilty of <sup>the</sup> deaths of innocent people. The Government's flexibility before the hunger strike began had not impressed them. Everyone had asked them to give up the hunger strike. No-one would be better pleased than the Government if the present hunger strikers gave up. But the Government was not prepared to be the victim of salami tactics. They would not treat murderers as prisoners of war. Freedom of association would be merely a step towards that status. The people who had been killed by the PIRA had had no choice. The hunger strikers had a choice.

Mr. Hume asked whether the Prime Minister recognised the gravity of the situation and whether she was going to do anything about it. The emotional overtones of the hunger strike were enormous. The present situation was the result of fundamental political instability and was getting worse. The Prime Minister said that the Government's job was to protect law abiding citizens. Any wavering on the issue of political status would be to give a licence to kill. The present crisis was the result of the reluctance of some people to accept the ballot box as a means of resolving their disagreements. Mr. Hume said that if this was all the Prime Minister had to say, the problems for Northern Ireland would be serious indeed. He did not expect to be around to help find solutions. He would be "swept away" in the disturbances.

/ The Prime Minister

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 4 -

The Prime Minister said that the Government would place no obstacles in the way of the European Commission on Human Rights. They would do everything to facilitate investigation of any complaint made under the Commission's Terms of Reference. They would do so in the same spirit as that in which they had allowed the media into the Maze and other prisons. The Government had nothing to hide. Mr. Hume said that the hunger strike was not about prison conditions. It was about a political problem. The PIRA held the stage. So long as they were allowed to do so, their support would grow. Eventually the Government would not be able to control matters. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland said that Mr. Hume's argument was in effect that if six or ten people were tough enough, there was nothing the Government could do to stop them achieving their objectives. Mr. Hume said that he had tried to persuade the hunger strikers to desist but had failed. The fact was that it was now more difficult for the hunger strikers to end the strike than to proceed with it. It was essential that some political initiative should be taken. He had been campaigning for next week's local elections; none of the electors were interested in anything but the hunger strike.

The Prime Minister repeated that she was willing to see the European Commission on Human Rights involved. She was not however prepared to see the hunger strikers treated as political prisoners, which was what they wanted. Mr. Hume asked how political status should be defined. The Prime Minister said that if the five demands were met, the hunger strikers would have that status. It would be impossible for the prisons to be administered as at present. The prison staff would refuse to do so. She, like Mr. Haughey, had never ceased to argue for peace and reconciliation but she was not prepared to grant prisoner of war status. Mr. Hume asked whether the steps he had proposed would be regarded as granting political status. The Prime Minister said they would be steps towards that status. Mr. Hume said that the Prime Minister should

/ remember the

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 5 -

remember the problem was one of nationalism. This was now on the increase. The Irish Government, under De Valera had shot men convicted of IRA outrages. The British could never do this. The Prime Minister said Mr. Hume was asking for total surrender. To give political status would be to act as a recruiting sergeant for the PIRA. Mr. Hume said that the PIRA were in any case gaining support "hand over fist". They were winning the propaganda battle. If HMG were to take the initiative they could reduce the hunger strikers to their true status as men of violence. There would of course be risks in taking an initiative but the cost of inaction would be greater. Polarisation in the community was growing. The hatred of Dr. Paisley in the Catholic community was increasing rapidly. Initially his recent activities had not been treated seriously. But now the frustration was apparent. The divisions in the community would, of course, be shown up in the elections next Wednesday.

The discussion ended at 2310 hours.

*Paul*

14 May 1981

CONFIDENTIAL

3. Army Clerk No 10  
1 FILE LRB  
CNID.

5  
27582 CABOFF GA SSSUUUUOM  
748059 DUP NI G

TO: THE PRIME MINISTER,  
10, DOWNING STREET,  
LONDON.

FROM: DR IAN PAISLEY M.P.

14 TH MAY 1981

DEAR PRIME MINISTER,  
WHEN IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT YOU HAD AGREED TO MEET MR JOHN HUME  
ON THE HUNGER STRIKE ISSUE I REQUESTED A MEETING WITH YOU IN ORDER  
TO PUT THE VIEWS OF THE MAJORITY PROTESTANT COMMUNITY ON THIS  
ISSUE AND THAT OF SECURITY.  
THIS MORNING I WAS ADVISED BY YOUR OFFICE THAT YOU WERE WILLING  
TO SEE ME BUT ONLY FOR FIFTEEN MINUTES. CONSIDERING THAT YOU  
ARE REPORTED TO HAVE GIVEN MR HUME, WHO IS NOT EVEN A MEMBER OF  
PARLIAMENT, SOME 60-90 MINUTES TO PUT THE CASE OF THE IRA  
MURDERERS I REGARD YOUR OFFER OF 15 MINUTES FOR ME TO MAKE  
REPRESENTATIONS ON BEHALF OF THE LAW ABIDING PROTESTANT COMMUNITY  
AS A CALCULATED INSULT.  
THEREFORE SINCE I WILL NOT HAVE THE CAUSE AND SUFFERINGS OF MY  
PEOPLE SLIGHTED IN THIS WAY I WILL NOT BE TAKING UP YOUR OFFER  
OF A FIFTEEN MINUTE MEETING. IF YOU CAN SPARE OVER ONE HOUR  
TO HEAR THE VIEWS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMUNITY THEN THE  
VIEWS OF THE PROTESTANTS SHOULD BE REGARDED AS JUST AS IMPORTANT  
AND TREATED AS SUCH.  
THOUGH AT THIS TIME YOU HAVE CHOSEN NOT TO HEAR ADEQUATELY THE  
VIEWS OF ULSTER LOYALISTS YOU MOST CERTAINLY WILL HEAR THOSE  
VIEWS NEXT WEDNESDAY THROUGH THE BALLOT BOX.

YOURS SINCERELY,

IAN R K PAISLEY M.P.  
748059 DUP NI G  
27582 CABOFF GM

ad

3. Duty Clerk No. 10  
1 File

5  
27582 CABOFF CA SSSUUUUUM  
748059 DUP NI G

TO: THE PRIME MINISTER,  
10, DOWNING STREET,  
LONDON.

FROM: DR IAN PAISLEY M.P.

14 TH MAY 1981.

DEAR PRIME MINISTER,  
WHEN IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT YOU HAD AGREED TO MEET MR JOHN HUME  
ON THE HUNGER STRIKE ISSUE I REQUESTED A MEETING WITH YOU IN ORDER  
TO PUT THE VIEWS OF THE MAJORITY PROTESTANT COMMUNITY ON THIS  
ISSUE AND THAT OF SECURITY.  
THIS MORNING I WAS ADVISED BY YOUR OFFICE THAT YOU WERE WILLING  
TO SEE ME BUT ONLY FOR FIFTEEN MINUTES. CONSIDERING THAT YOU  
ARE REPORTED TO HAVE GIVEN MR HUME, WHO IS NOT EVEN A MEMBER OF  
PARLIAMENT, SOME 60-90 MINUTES TO PUT THE CASE OF THE IRA  
MURDERERS I REGARD YOUR OFFER OF 15 MINUTES FOR ME TO MAKE  
REPRESENTATIONS ON BEHALF OF THE LAW ABIDING PROTESTANT COMMUNITY  
AS A CALCULATED INSULT.  
THEREFORE SINCE I WILL NOT HAVE THE CAUSE AND SUFFERINGS OF MY  
PEOPLE SLIGHTED IN THIS WAY I WILL NOT BE TAKING UP YOUR OFFER  
OF A FIFTEEN MINUTE MEETING. IF YOU CAN SPARE OVER ONE HOUR  
TO HEAR THE VIEWS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMUNITY THEN THE  
VIEWS OF THE PROTESTANTS SHOULD BE REGARDED AS JUST AS IMPORTANT  
AND TREATED AS SUCH.  
THOUGH AT THIS TIME YOU HAVE CHOSEN NOT TO HEAR ADEQUATELY THE  
VIEWS OF ULSTER LOYALISTS YOU MOST CERTAINLY WILL HEAR THOSE  
VIEWS NEXT WEDNESDAY THROUGH THE BALLOT BOX.

YOURS SINCERELY,

IAN R. K. PAISLEY M.P.  
748059 DUP NI G  
27582 CABOFF GM

GR 420

UNCLASSIFIED

FM WASHINGTON 142205Z MAY 81

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1489 OF 14 MAY

INFO PRIORITY BIS NEW YORK, NIO (B) NIO (L) DUBLIN

ROUTINE TO ALL CG IN US

YOUR TELNO 726: PRIME MINISTER'S REPLY TO THE FOUR HORSEMEN

1. THE PRIME MINISTER'S REPLY WAS DELIVERED TO THE OFFICES OF ALL FOUR HORSEMEN THIS MORNING. IN RESPONSE SENATOR KENNEDY HAS ISSUED THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT TO THE PRESS:

BEGINS:

THE CENTRAL POINT OF THE MESSAGE THAT SPEAKER O'NEILL, SENATOR MOYNIHAN, GOVERNOR CAREY, AND I CONVEYED TO PRIME MINISTER THATCHER LAST WEEK IS THAT GREATER FLEXIBILITY BY GREAT BRITAIN ON THE ISSUES OF PRISON ADMINISTRATION INVOLVED IN THE HUNGER STRIKE AT THE MAZE PRISON IN NORTHERN IRELAND IS ESSENTIAL TO AVOID GREATER VIOLENCE.

I CONDEMN ALL VIOLENCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND. I CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT BRITAIN HAS A RESPONSIBILITY TO ALL THE PEOPLE ON BOTH SIDES OF THE COMMUNITY TO PURSUE EVERY POSSIBLE STEP THAT COULD LEAD TO A QUICK, FAIR, AND HUMANITARIAN SETTLEMENT OF THE HUNGER STRIKES, BEFORE ADDITIONAL DEATHS OCCUR. UNFEELING INFLEXIBILITY WILL ACHIEVE NOTHING BUT MORE DEATHS.

THE PRIME MINISTER'S RESPONSE SHOWS ONLY THE SHADOW OF FLEXIBILITY, WITHOUT THE SUBSTANCE. IT IGNORES POSSIBLE INITIATIVES WHICH COULD RESOLVE THE CURRENT DISPUTE OVER PRISON CONDITIONS.

OBVIOUS AVENUES ARE OPEN FOR SENSIBLE AND REASONABLE COMPROMISES ON THE PRACTICAL ISSUES OF PRISON ADMINISTRATION, WITHOUT COMPROMISING IN ANY WAY ON THE BASIC PRINCIPLE OF OPPOSITION TO VIOLENCE.

THE LEADERS OF GREAT BRITAIN HAVE A HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY TO SEEK SUCH A COMPROMISE - SURELY BEFORE MORE HUNGER STRIKERS DIE, BEFORE MORE LIVES ARE LOST IN VIOLENT DEMONSTRATIONS, BEFORE ALL THE HOPEFUL PROGRESS OF RECENT MONTHS IS LOST - IT IS TIME FOR BRITAIN TO BREAK THIS ENDLESS SPIRAL OF DEATH IN NORTHERN IRELAND, SO THAT LEADERS OF GOODWILL MAY RESUME THEIR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE A PEACEFUL AND LASTING SETTLEMENT OF THE CONFLICT.

ENDS

2/NO HAVE



2. WE HAVE REITERATED TO KENNEDY'S OFFICE THAT SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENTS WERE MADE TO THE PRISON REGIME IN NORTHERN IRELAND LAST YEAR, THAT THE HUNGER STRIKERS AND OTHER PROTESTORS HAVE DELIBERATELY CHOSEN NOT TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEM, AND THAT THERE IS NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THEY WOULD ABANDON THEIR PROTEST IN RETURN FOR FURTHER SMALL CONCESSIONS FALLING SHORT OF POLITICAL STATUS. WE STRESSED THAT IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES FURTHER GENERALISED CALLS FOR THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO COMPROMISE, HOWEVER WELL MEANING, WERE UNHELPFUL.

HENDERSON

*Re/WHITEHALL  
R-D*

NORTHERN IRELAND: ADVANCE COPIES 21

F N IRELAND OFFICE - PS TO SEC OF STATE  
PS/LPS RM 66 A/2 GGS

PS/PUS N IRELAND OFFICE [4 copies]

MR BULLARD

MR FERGUSSON

HD/RID

HD/PUSD (2)

HD/INF

HD/NEWS DEPT

N.A.D. ...  
Mr Day ...  
Mr ...

SIR K STOWE  
MR MORIATY  
MR MARSHALL  
MR BUXTON

CABINET OFFICE - SIR R ARMSTRONG  
DIO

~~NO 10 DOWNING STREET~~

RESIDENT CLERK

ADVANCE COPY

RESTRICTED

FM WASHINGTON 142200Z MAY 81

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1488 OF 14 MAY

INFO PRIORITY CONSULATE GENERAL NEW YORK, NIO(BELFAST)

NIO(LONDON) ROUTINE TEL AVIV

NORTHERN IRELAND: GOVERNOR CAREY

1. GOVERNOR CAREY'S STAFF HAVE TOLD US THAT HE EXPECTS TO BE IN LONDON BETWEEN 20 AND 22 MAY ON HIS WAY BACK FROM A VISIT TO ISRAEL. THEY HAVE SOUNDED US (BEFORE THE PRIME MINISTER'S REPLY TO THE FOUR HORSEMEN WAS DELIVERED) ON WHETHER, IF THE GOVERNOR ASKED TO SEE THE PRIME MINISTER, THE REQUEST WOULD BE LIKELY TO BE SUCCESSFUL. THEY MADE IT CLEAR THAT CAREY WAS NOT INTERESTED IN MEETING OTHER MINISTERS.

2. THE PRIME MINISTER'S REPLY TO THE FOUR HORSEMEN DEALS FULLY WITH CAREY'S CONCERNS ABOUT NORTHERN IRELAND, AND, INCIDENTALLY, WITH HIS SEPARATE MESSAGES TO YOU AND TO THE PRIME MINISTER. IN VIEW OF CAREY'S APPARENT RELUCTANCE TO MEET MINISTERS OTHER THAN THE PRIME MINISTER I CONCLUDE THAT HIS MAIN OBJECTIVE IS TO ENHANCE HIS OWN POLITICAL STANDING RATHER THAN TO HAVE A REASONED DISCUSSION ON NORTHERN IRELAND. UNLESS THEREFORE THE PRIME MINISTER WISHES TO PUT ACROSS OUR CASE TO CAREY PERSONALLY, I RECOMMEND THAT WE BE AUTHORISED TO LET CAREY'S STAFF KNOW THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO SEE HIM.

HENDERSON

SUBJECT

CONFIDENTIAL

cc Master

JS

RECORD OF A CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND MR. JAMES MOLYNEAUX, MP, AT THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ON 14 MAY 1981 AT 2000 HOURS

---

Present

The Prime Minister

Mr. James Molyneaux

The Secretary of State  
for Northern Ireland

Mr. Ian Gow

Mr. Michael Alexander

\* \* \* \* \*

The Prime Minister said that, as far as the hunger strike was concerned, Mr. Molyneaux need have no worry about the policy of HMG. The Government did not intend to change its position in any way. Mr. Molyneaux welcomed this assurance. He added that even if the Government were to seek a compromise, it would be futile. The PIRA would always refuse to be "criminalised". They wanted nothing less than separate status.

Mr. Molyneaux asked if there was any way in which he or members of his Party could help the Government. The Secretary of State suggested that perhaps they could lend assistance in the propaganda battle. In the United States, for instance, the Irish voices which were being heard were in the most part Republican. It would be helpful if some Unionists could go there to speak and appear on television. Mr. Molyneaux said he was going to Canada in mid-June but doubted that he would have time to go to the United States. There was, however, a possibility that Mr. McCusker might be able to make a visit. Mr. Molyneaux undertook to pursue the matter.

Mr. Molyneaux said that he believed public opinion was becoming increasingly dismayed at daily scenes of inadequately equipped soldiers and policemen being assaulted with petrol bombs. Should not consideration be given to the reintroduction of the water cannon and tear gas? The Secretary of State said that these were matters on which he took the operational

/ advice

CONFIDENTIAL

- 2 -

advice of the Chief Constable. For the moment, the Chief Constable preferred to use the baton round. This had the advantage of keeping the rioters at a sufficient distance to make the petrol bombs relatively ineffective. It was, of course, Government policy that the operational commanders could have whatever equipment they wanted. The Prime Minister confirmed this. Mr. Molyneaux took the point, but said that perhaps the Government should make it clear to the operational commanders that they would indeed be given what they asked for. He felt at present they were inhibited in asking for new types of equipment. The Prime Minister said that, whatever might have been the case under the previous Administration, the forces of law and order knew that the present Government was on their side. Mr. Molyneaux agreed.

Mr. Molyneaux asked whether the high velocity SLR should not be supplemented by low velocity weapons. High velocity weapons often injured more than one person. The Secretary of State repeated that he relied upon the advice of the operational commanders on issues such as this.

Mr. Molyneaux raised the question of the recent mortar attacks at Newtownhamilton and Rosslea. The mortars had clearly been manufactured, tested and practice-fired in the Republic. The authorities in the Republic were surely aware of this. The sounds of test-firing had been heard north of the Border for weeks past. The Secretary of State agreed that there had been some evidence of test-firing. If any hard evidence became available, it would be put to the Irish authorities at once. The recent success by the security forces at Forkhill showed that cross-Border cooperation was working well.

Mr. Molyneaux said that he was not persuaded that the use of the army on the Border was as effective as it might be. He accepted the primacy of the police in the Province as a whole but should the armed forces not be given a freer rein along the

/ frontier?

CONFIDENTIAL

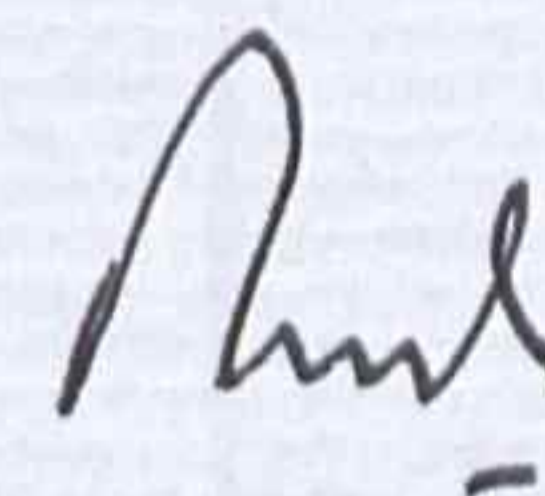
- 3 -

frontier? The present policy was to concentrate the soldiers in particular locations. The Secretary of State said that this was an operational matter. There were more troops in the Border areas than might at first seem apparent. No troops had been removed from the Border area to deal with the present difficulties in urban districts. He would be very glad to arrange for Mr. Molyneaux to visit the Border areas and meet the Commanders there. He would be happy to accompany Mr. Molyneaux on such a visit. Mr. Molyneaux accepted the offer.

Mr. Molyneaux asked whether it would not be possible for the customs officers to carry out their job more effectively than at present. The Secretary of State sympathised with Mr. Molyneaux's question, though he felt bound to point out that the customs service was responsible to the Chancellor of the Exchequer rather than to him.

Mr. Molyneaux asked whether co-ordination between governments in tackling international terrorism could not be improved. The Prime Minister said that there was already a great deal of co-operation between governments. However, she would consider whether the matter could not be referred to again, e.g. in a communique from a future European Council meeting.

The meeting ended at 2020.



15 May 1981

CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT

cc Master

JS

RECORD OF A MEETING BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION, MR. MICHAEL FOOT, AT THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ON 14 MAY 1981 AT 2025 HOURS

---

Present

The Prime Minister  
Secretary of State for  
Northern Ireland  
Mr. Ian Gow  
Mr. Michael Alexander

Mr. Michael Foot  
Mr. Roy Hattersley  
Mr. Don Concannon

\* \* \* \* \*

Mr. Foot and the Prime Minister agreed at the outset that while the fact of the meeting should not be denied, its subject matter should remain absolutely private. Spokesmen should say no more than that the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition met from time to time to discuss Parliamentary and other business.

Mr. Foot said that his request for a meeting with the Prime Minister had arisen from discussions which he had had earlier with Mr. John Hume and others. All accepted that there could be no question of political status for hunger strikers and other PIRA prisoners. The question was whether any arrangement could be found on the basis of meeting one or two of the five demands which would relieve the Government of the accusation that it was being intransigent. (Mr. Foot referred to this as "a false charge".) Mr. Foot then read from the attached paper which he left with the Prime Minister at the end of the meeting.

Mr. Foot said that if the Government proceeded in this way, the PIRA would no doubt claim a great victory. This would not be justified. The Government would be able to demonstrate as much by referring to the three demands which had been rejected. Of course there was a risk that the PIRA might continue to insist on the other three demands but given the advantages of bringing the strike to an end, this risk should be run.

/ The Prime Minister

# CONFIDENTIAL


- 2 -

The Prime Minister said that the hunger strikers could bring the strike to an end at any time. Mr. Foot agreed but added that he was looking for concessions which would "enable them to call it off"; or, failing that, put the onus for the continuation of the present situation on them. This was what Mr. Hume had been saying. In Mr. Foot's view, it would be advisable to put his proposition to the hunger strikers. The dangers of the present situation were very great. The Government should try to find a means of escaping from it.

The Prime Minister said she was amazed by what Mr. Foot had had to say. The report made by the European Commission on Human Rights last year had been implemented in full. That report had not proposed free association. The reaction of the prison staff to such a proposal was easy to imagine. None the less, the Government had gone further than recommended by the Commission on Human Rights. Despite heavy criticism, they had decided the previous autumn to issue civilian clothes to conforming prisoners. There was now a thoroughly liberal regime being applied in modern prisons. The Government intended to stick on this point. In any case, the hunger strikers and their representatives had repeatedly underlined their insistence on the five demands being met in full. There was no question of the Government acting as Mr. Foot proposed.

Mr. Foot repeated that he did not dispute what the Prime Minister had said. The Opposition had not criticised the Government. On the contrary, they had supported them. However, the dangers of the present situation could not be disregarded. It was essential to consider whether there might not be an escape route. If the Prime Minister was right about the five demands - and what Sands had said to Mr. Concannon suggested that she might be - the offer of a concession on two demands would be rejected and that would be the end of the matter. However, if the Prime Minister was wrong, then a way out would have been found.

/ The Secretary of State



NORTHERN IRELAND PRISON REGIME

---

The protesting prisoners in the Maze Prison have issued five demands which they say should be met before they will give up their protest. These demands are:

1. The right to free association.
2. The right to wear their own clothes at all times.
3. The right to refuse prison work and to arrange their own educational programme.
4. The right to full remission for protesting prisoners.
5. An increase in the number of visits, parcels and letters allowed.

Together, there is no doubt that these demands amount to a single demand for political prisoner status. The Opposition accepts that there can be no concession on special status for those convicted of terrorist crimes.

However, we believe it is worthwhile considering if some changes in the prison regime, which fall substantially short of political status, would offer the hunger strikers the opportunity to abandon their present path, or would demonstrate the intransigence of the hunger strikers.

/Clothing



Clothing

The current situation with regard to clothing is that a variety of civilian type clothing is supplied by the prison authorities. In addition, non-prison clothing of an approved type may be worn for visits, and evening and weekend association.

Already women prisoners in Northern Ireland are allowed to wear their own clothes at all times. Since considerable concessions have been made on the issue of clothing at the Maze over the past year (especially the abolition of prison uniforms), it would be a small concession to offer the prisoners the right to wear their own clothes at all times.

Association

Currently conforming prisoners in the Maze are allowed association every evening (to watch television, play indoor games). There is also association at times during the day and on Saturdays and Sundays. Already the regime offered is quite liberal. We would suggest that it would be a minor change to offer association at all times when the prisoners are not engaged on prison work if that association was confined to individual cell blocks.

/We believe

We believe that the Government might make adjustments on these two points which could in no way be interpreted as an offer of political prisoner status. As far as demand 3 is concerned, the prisoners cannot be allowed to arrange their own programmes of prison work and education since that would be tantamount to running the prisons. Any concession on that demand would have the effect of conferring special category status on the prisoners.

Any changes in the prison regime should apply to all prisoners in Northern Ireland.

If such changes as we have recommended are made, then prisoners who refused them on the grounds that they were insufficient would be seen as inflexible. To offer what we have suggested would switch the initiative away from the IRA - and would put refusing and protesting prisoners into a position where they would have to make a decision.

14 May 1981



(2)

I hope all our Ambassadors  
are as splendidly worked as in the  
attached telegrams.

Prime Minister

*mf*

*Am*

INFORMATION WORK ON NORTHERN IRELAND OVERSEAS

On 7 May the Cabinet invited me, in consultation with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, to arrange for further information to be disseminated overseas in support of the Government's position.

2. In the past few weeks our main Posts abroad have been sent several Guidance telegrams, listing key arguments to deploy with the media and other opinion-formers. At the same time our Posts continue to be sent a wide range of other material including Ministerial statements, background briefs and pamphlets, which they have been drawing on actively.

3. On 8 May we issued a further Guidance telegram which suggested that Heads of Post should make further efforts with the media, and which highlighted some of the main points to put across. Our Ambassador and members of his staff in the United States have appeared on television a number of times. Elsewhere (notably in Western Europe) our Ambassadors have been active with local editors and parliamentarians. We have widened the list of posts receiving the briefing material mentioned above.

4. Very many overseas news reports on Northern Ireland have of course come direct from the 400 journalists and TV crews, from all over the world, who are currently in Belfast; and this is something which affects the capacity of our posts to influence what gets printed.

/5. Our

5. Our Embassy in Washington reckons that three-quarters of the editorials in American papers have been favourable to us. It is also worth noting that the recent anti-British demonstrations on the Continent seem largely to have been Communist inspired. Our posts are now directing their efforts to nailing the lie that with a little more flexibility on our part the hunger strikes could have been ended.

6. I am sending copies of this minute to Cabinet colleagues, and to the Secretary to the Cabinet.

*I.H.S.*

14 May 1981

3. Army Clerk No. 1  
FILE

5  
27582 CABOFF GA SSSUUUUOM  
748059 DUP NI G

TO: THE PRIME MINISTER,  
10, DOWNING STREET,  
LONDON.

FROM: DR IAN PAISLEY M.P.

14 TH MAY 1981

DEAR PRIME MINISTER,  
WHEN IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT YOU HAD AGREED TO MEET MR JOHN HUME  
ON THE HUNGER STRIKE ISSUE I REQUESTED A MEETING WITH YOU IN ORDER  
TO PUT THE VIEWS OF THE MAJORITY PROTESTANT COMMUNITY ON THIS  
ISSUE AND THAT OF SECURITY.  
THIS MORNING I WAS ADVISED BY YOUR OFFICE THAT YOU WERE WILLING  
TO SEE ME BUT ONLY FOR FIFTEEN MINUTES. CONSIDERING THAT YOU  
ARE REPORTED TO HAVE GIVEN MR HUME, WHO IS NOT EVEN A MEMBER OF  
PARLIAMENT, SOME 60-90 MINUTES TO PUT THE CASE OF THE IRA  
MURDERERS I REGARD YOUR OFFER OF 15 MINUTES FOR ME TO MAKE  
REPRESENTATIONS ON BEHALF OF THE LAW ABIDING PROTESTANT COMMUNITY  
AS A CALCULATED INSULT.  
THEREFORE SINCE I WILL NOT HAVE THE CAUSE AND SUFFERINGS OF MY  
PEOPLE SLIGHTED IN THIS WAY I WILL NOT BE TAKING UP YOUR OFFER  
OF A FIFTEEN MINUTE MEETING. IF YOU CAN SPARE OVER ONE HOUR  
TO HEAR THE VIEWS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMUNITY THEN THE  
VIEWS OF THE PROTESTANTS SHOULD BE REGARDED AS JUST AS IMPORTANT  
AND TREATED AS SUCH.  
THOUGH AT THIS TIME YOU HAVE CHOSEN NOT TO HEAR ADEQUATELY THE  
VIEWS OF ULSTER LOYALISTS YOU MOST CERTAINLY WILL HEAR THOSE  
VIEWS NEXT WEDNESDAY THROUGH THE BALLOT BOX.

YOURS SINCERELY,

IAN R K PAISLEY M.P.  
748059 DUP NI G  
27582 CABOFF GM

NOTE FOR THE FILE

cc Mr Alexander  
Mr Gow

I had two conversations with Dr. Paisley on the telephone this morning. During the first call I offered him a meeting with the Prime Minister this evening at 2020 at the House of Commons but omitted to mention that it was for 15 minutes only. He told me that he would have to fly over specially and that it was not terribly convenient. I mentioned that next week's diary was very bad and that it would be difficult to offer him an alternative.

Following a discussion with Mr. Alexander and Mr. Gow to the effect that it was essential that the 15 minute duration was mentioned, I rang Dr. Paisley again and said that I would try to find him a time next week if that suited him better. He was extremely angry that he was only being offered 15 minutes, pointing out that Mr. Hume had been given 50 minutes yesterday evening. He said that the Protestants were used to being treated in this way. We discussed the possibility of a 1530 meeting after Questions on Thursday 21 May but as the conversation progressed he became less happy about the meeting taking place at all and it was left that I would ring him at 0930 tomorrow, Friday 15 May on Belfast 655 694 when he would tell me whether or not he intends to accept this time.

NB | As I shall not be here at 0930 tomorrow morning, Mr Alexander will ring him.

*ej.*

14 May 1981

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,  
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

Michael Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1

*Agreed* *ms*  
14 May 1981

*Dear Michael,*

HUNGER STRIKE: TELEGRAM FROM CARDINAL O FIAICH

I enclose a self-explanatory draft reply to Cardinal O Fiaich's telegram of 13 May to the Prime Minister.

The Cardinal has long advocated the two concessions - on optional work and dress - which he puts again in the telegram. He believes that if these two concessions are made, the other three 'demands' can be easily fudged. The draft attempts to answer this second point too, though he does not make it.

I am copying this letter to Roderic Lyne (FCO) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

*Yours ever,*  
*R A Harrington*  
R A HARRINGTON

E.R.

DRAFT LETTER FROM PRIME MINISTER TO THE MOST REVEREND TOMAS  
O FIAICH, ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH, CATHEDRAL ROAD, ARMAGH

Thank you for your telegram of 13 May about the hunger strike at the Maze Prison. I understand your concern, which I fully share.

I must point out, however, that the Government is not the inflexible party in this issue. The Provisional IRA, at whose behest the hunger strike is taking place, have stated and restated from the beginning that they would call off the strike only if the Government were to concede all five of their demands. ~~To make concessions on two of them, as you suggest, would not satisfy them. Indeed, it would only encourage them to press for the rest.~~ What they ~~Provisionals~~ want is not prison reforms, but a special different status for some prisoners. This the Government cannot concede, since it would encourage further blackmail and support for terrorism. We cannot treat persons convicted of criminal offences as prisoners of war, which is what they want.

In contrast, the Government had demonstrated flexibility in a number of ways. We introduced important and humane changes in the prison regime last year. We took the initiative to de-escalate the dirty protest in January, and responded promptly to the ending of the dirty protest in March, cutting the rate of loss of remission



E.R.

by half. We allowed the three Dublin TDs, the ECHR representatives and the Pope's representative to visit the Maze in the hope that they could find some way to persuade Mr Sands and the other hunger strikers to cease their action. I hope the remaining hunger strikers will even now respond to the Pope's message.

You make a number of points about the prison population in Northern Ireland. I am very aware of them, as is the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. We are committed to maintaining an enlightened and humanitarian prison regime, and I believe we do so. We are ready to listen to representations from responsible quarters - including for example the European Commission on Human Rights - on all aspects of the environment for all conforming prisoners: but we can <sup>nr</sup> never yield on the issue of political justification for murder and violence and <sup>of</sup> prisoner of war status for those who commit such crimes.

Like you, I am anxious to avoid all further needless deaths in Northern Ireland from whatever part of the community. You in particular will I am sure appreciate the heavy load my colleagues and I bear in discharging our responsibilities. But the solution <sup>does not</sup> lie ~~not~~ <sup>lies</sup> in our hands, ~~but~~ with the hunger strikers themselves, their families and advisers. More directly, it lies with the leaders of the Provisional IRA, who have taken a cold-blooded decision that the unfortunate men now fasting in prison are of more use to them dead than alive. This seems to me the most immoral and inflexible decision anyone could take.

Since you released your telegram to the press, I am sure you will not mind my publishing this reply.

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,  
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

Michael Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1

14 May 1981

*Dear Michael,*

I enclose a note giving a line to take on the points which Mr Molyneaux has said he will raise, and some others which he might raise, when he meets the Prime Minister this evening.

*Yours ever,  
Ray Harrington*

R A HARRINGTON

*See record of  
discussion.*

*for [unclear]*

jpg

MR MOLYNEAUX'S MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER, 14 MAY 1981

"INTERMEDIATE WEAPON" FOR USE AGAINST RIOTERS

1. The RUC have studied and tested all available riot control methods. The Chief Constable is satisfied that in present circumstances the use of baton rounds provide the most practicable method of controlling riots, consistent with the principle of using the minimum of force.

IRA MORTAR CAPABILITY: USE OF SAS

2. It is a matter for serious concern that there have recently been two accurate, though fortunately unsuccessful, mortar attacks on joint RUC/Army posts. There is good security co-operation along the border, and every effort will be made to prevent such weapons being brought in. As to the SAS, they are available in Northern Ireland but it is the Government's practice not to discuss their deployment in any detail.

AN INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVE

3. The Prime Minister may like to take delivery of the proposal and if appropriate to remind Mr Molyneaux that the UK has over a number of years participated actively in international discussion and arrangements designed to deal with terrorism of all kinds.

STRENGTHENED POWERS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

4. The Government will persevere with the search for a way of transferring significant powers to locally elected representatives on a basis acceptable to both sides of the community. The option of increasing local government powers has not been ruled out. However, it is a fact that such a move could well

E.

prove divisive and would be strongly opposed by the representatives of the minority community on the grounds that it would revive fears of discrimination against Catholics.

#### ANTI-BRITISH PROPAGANDA IN USA

5. Our posts overseas take every opportunity to rebut hostile propaganda and dispel ignorance about Northern Ireland. We are very aware of the need to counter Provisional IRA propaganda in the USA and a significant proportion of HMG's information effort there is devoted to that end. We also provide information and briefing for Northern Irishmen who go there - a Presbyterian Church delegation is attracting helpful press attention there right now.

#### LEGISLATION TO DISQUALIFY CONVICTED TERRORISTS FROM PARLIAMENT

6. The Government is certainly considering introducing such legislation in the near future.

#### POSSIBLE ELECTORAL MALPRACTICE IN THE 20 MAY LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

7. That is a matter for the Chief Electoral Officer.

#### A PARAMILITARY-STYLE FUNERAL FOR HUGHES?

8. The actions of the security forces in any particular situation are a matter for the objective and professional judgement of their commanders on the ground. In the past, it has often been considered that moves by the security forces to tackle what are clearly attempts at stage-managed provocation would have resulted in unnecessary bloodshed. On such occasions, considerable numbers of soldiers and police officers, both seen and unseen, are usually on duty and where it is possible to establish the identity of persons who have broken the law, charges can be brought, as has occurred in the past.

ANY QUESTIONS ON DETAILED ACTIVITIES OF SECURITY FORCES

9. This is a matter for the expert judgement of the Chief Constable and the GOC.

EXTRADITION FROM THE IRISH REPUBLIC

10. We have made it clear that we regard extradition as the most effective method of bringing fugitive terrorists to justice. In the absence of extradition, we shall continue to press the Irish authorities to make effective use of the extra-territorial legislation whereby people may be prosecuted in the Republic for offences committed in Northern Ireland.

IS EXTRADITION COVERED IN THE JOINT STUDIES?

11. It would not be appropriate at this stage to reveal the detail of the Joint Studies. Like other aspects of inter-governmental relations the studies are being conducted on a confidential basis. When action is contemplated as a result of any suggestions that come forward Parliament will of course be informed. I have repeatedly made clear that the Studies do not deal with the constitutional position of Northern Ireland.

*copies  
sent to  
D/Industry*

UNCLASSIFIED

10309 - 2

OO WASHINGTON  
OO BIS NEW YORK  
OO C G NEW YORK  
OO C G BOSTON  
GRS 1067

*fs.  
Runt*

UNCLASSIFIED

DESKBY 141400Z WASHINGTON  
DESKBY 141400Z BIS NEW YORK  
DESKBY 141400Z C G NEW YORK  
DESKBY 141400Z C G BOSTON  
DESKBY 141400Z NIO BELFAST  
DESKBY 141400 Z DUBLIN  
FM FCO

TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON

TELEGRAM NUMBER 728 OF 14 MAY 81

MY 2 IPT'S : PRIME MINISTER'S REPLY TO THE FOUR HORSEMEN  
FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF ANNEX TO PRIME MINISTER'S MESSAGE.

- '1. IN 1978 THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERED THE SITUATION AT THE MAZE PRISON IN THE CONTEXT OF AN APPLICATION MADE TO THE COMMISSION BY FOUR PRISONERS.
2. THE PRISONERS' MAIN COMPLAINT WAS THAT THEIR RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE AND BELIEF (UNDER ARTICLE 9 OF THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS) WAS DENIED THEM BECAUSE THE PRISON AUTHORITIES SOUGHT TO APPLY TO THEM THE NORMAL PRISON REGIME. THE COMMISSION IN THEIR DECISION OF JUNE 1980 FOUND THAT A RIGHT TO PREFERENTIAL STATUS FOR A CERTAIN CATEGORY OF PRISONERS WAS NOT AMONGST THOSE GUARANTEED BY THE CONVENTION OR BY ARTICLE 9 IN PARTICULAR.
3. THE APPLICANTS ALSO ARGUED THAT THE REGIME UNDER WHICH THEY LIVED AMOUNTED TO INHUMAN AND DEGRADING TREATMENT AND PUNISHMENT IN BREACH OF ARTICLE 3 OF THE CONVENTION. THE COMMISSION DECLARED THAT ALL THEIR COMPLAINTS UNDER THIS ARTICLE WERE INADMISSABLE ON THE GROUNDS THAT THEY WERE 'MANIFESTLY ILL-FOUNDED'. AT THAT STAGE MANY OF THE PRISONERS WERE, AS YOU

KNOW, CONDUCTING A UNIQUELY DISGUSTING FORM OF PROTEST IN WHICH THEY FOULED THEIR CELLS WITH FOOD AND EXCRETA. THEY HAD BROKEN UP FURNITURE IN THEIR CELLS AND HAD USED IT TO DAMAGE THE WINDOWS AND OTHER FITTINGS. THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION RECOGNISED THAT THESE CONDITIONS WERE SELF-INFLICTED. THE PRISON AUTHORITIES, OF COURSE, MADE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CELLS TO BE CLEANED AND REPAINTED AT FREQUENT INTERVALS.

4. BUT AMONG THEIR OTHER FINDINGS THE COMMISSION EMPHASISED THE PRISON AUTHORITIES' DUTY 'TO KEEP UNDER CONSTANT REVIEW THEIR REACTION TO RECALCITRANT PRISONERS ENGAGED IN A DEVELOPING AND PROTRACTED PROTEST' AND COMMENTED THAT 'EFFORTS SHOULD HAVE BEEN MADE BY THE AUTHORITIES TO ENSURE THAT THE APPLICANTS COULD AVAIL OF CERTAIN FACILITIES SUCH AS TAKING REGULAR EXERCISE IN THE OPEN AIR WITH SOME FORM OF CLOTHING (OTHER THAN PRISON CLOTHING) AND MAKING GREATER USE OF THE PRISON AMENITIES UNDER SIMILAR CONDITIONS'. IT ALSO SAID THAT 'ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD HAVE BEEN MADE TO ENABLE THE APPLICANTS TO CONSULT OUTSIDE MEDICAL SPECIALISTS EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE NOT PREPARED TO WEAR PRISON UNIFORM OR UNDERWEAR.'.

5. THUS THE PRISONERS' CLAIM FOR POLITICAL OR SPECIAL STATUS HAS BEEN INVESTIGATED RECENTLY AND DECISIVELY REJECTED BY AN INDEPENDENT AUTHORITY OF THE HIGHEST STANDING: THE CONDITIONS AT THE MAZE PRISON WERE COVERED AS PART OF THE COMMISSION'S INVESTIGATION AND NO SERIOUS COMPLAINT AGAINST THEM WAS SUSTAINED, AND THE COMMISSION DID NOT, WHERE IT FELT NECESSARY, HESITATE TO CRITICISE THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PRISON AUTHORITIES.

6. THESE CRITICISMS WERE RESPECTED AND NEW ARRANGEMENTS TO SATISFY THEM HAVE BEEN IN FORCE FOR MORE THAN A YEAR. THAT IS NOT ALL. DURING THE COURSE OF 1980 THE PROTESTING PRISONERS WERE OFFERED, WHETHER OR NOT THEY ENDED THEIR PROTEST, A RANGE OF IMPROVED CONDITIONS IN CONNECTION WITH LETTERS, VISITS, RECREATION, ASSOCIATION AND COMPASSIONATE LEAVE. IN OCTOBER LAST YEAR THE GOVERNMENT ENDED PRISON UNIFORM AS SUCH IN NORTHERN IRELAND PRISONS IN FAVOUR OF THE ISSUE OF CIVILIAN-TYPE CLOTHING IN A RANGE OF COLOURS AND STYLES. OF THESE MEASURES, THE PROTESTING PRISONERS HAD, BY THE BEGINNING OF

UNCLASSIFIED

10309 - 2

MARCH THIS YEAR, MADE USE IN SOME CASES OF THE FACILITY OF ADDITIONAL VISITS TO RELATIVES IN ILL-HEALTH. APART FROM THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO RESPONSE.

7. THE FIRST HUNGER STRIKE ENDED ON DECEMBER 18, 1980. CONTRARY TO WHAT HAS BEEN ALLEGED, NO UNDERTAKINGS WERE GIVEN TO THE HUNGER STRIKERS OR THE REMAINING PROTESTING PRISONERS AT THAT TIME, BEFORE IT OR AFTER: WHAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD SOUGHT TO DO WAS TO EXPLAIN TO ALL PROTESTING PRISONERS WHAT FACILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES WERE AVAILABLE TO THEM WITHIN THE EXISTING PRISON REGIME, WHICH, AS WAS ALSO MADE CLEAR TO THEM, THE GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO MAINTAINING AND, AS CIRCUMSTANCES ALLOW, IMPROVING. THAT EXPLANATION STANDS AND THE SAME FACILITIES REMAIN AVAILABLE. WHEN THE ENDING OF THE FIRST HUNGER STRIKE FAILED TO LEAD TO THE ENDING OF THE OTHER PROTESTS, THE PRISON AUTHORITIES, WITH THE FULL BACKING OF THE GOVERNMENT, TOOK THE INITIATIVE TO MOVE 96 OF THE PROTESTING PRISONERS INTO CLEAN CELLS. WHEN IT BECAME CLEAR THAT THOSE PRISONERS HAD STOPPED FOULING THEIR CELLS, NORMAL CELL FURNITURE WAS PROVIDED.

8. THIS PROCESS COMPLETED, THE NEXT STEP TOWARDS A CONFORMING REGIME WAS THE ISSUE OF THE CIVILIAN-TYPE CLOTHING. THE PRISONERS REFUSED THIS, SAYING THAT THEY WERE NOT PREPARED TO WEAR IT UNLESS THEIR OWN CLOTHING WAS PROVIDED AT THE SAME TIME: AND THAT THEY WOULD TAKE PART IN NO WORK OTHER THAN THAT OF CLEANING THEIR OWN CELLS AND RECEIVING FULL-TIME EDUCATION. (THE COMMISSION HAD, INCIDENTALLY, SAID IN ITS FINDINGS THAT IT DID NOT CONSIDER THERE TO BE ANYTHING INHERENTLY DEGRADING OR OBJECTIONABLE ABOUT THE REQUIREMENT TO WEAR A PRISON UNIFORM OR TO WORK.) THE GOVERNMENT HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO SAY IT COULD NOT ACCEPT THESE CONDITIONS. THE PRISONERS' RESPONSE, ON 27 JANUARY, WAS TO SMASH THE FURNITURE THEY HAD BEEN GIVEN AND TO DAMAGE THE FABRIC OF THEIR CELLS.

9. ON MARCH 2 THE PRISONERS ENGAGED IN THE 'DIRTY' PROTEST AT THE MAZE, AND AT ARMAGH, SAID THEY WERE ENDING THIS FORM OF PROTEST, BUT WERE DOING SO NOT AS A STEP TOWARDS CONFORMITY WITH THE PRISON REGIME BUT IN SUPPORT OF THE HUNGER STRIKE WHICH HAD THEN JUST BEGUN. THE GOVERNMENT NEVERTHELESS WELCOMED



UNCLASSIFIED

10309 - 2

THE PRISONERS' DECISION TO END THE CONDITIONS THAT THEY HAD IMPOSED UPON THEMSELVES: THE PRISONERS WERE TRANSFERRED TO CLEAN CELLS AS QUICKLY AS THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS COULD BE MADE: AND WHEN THEY ASKED FOR THE ISSUE OF FURNITURE THIS WAS, NOTWITHSTANDING THE ACTIONS OF JANUARY 27, INITIATED. AS IN JANUARY, THE PRISON AUTHORITIES RESPONDED TO THIS SCALING DOWN OF PROTEST ACTION BY SCALING DOWN THE PUNISHMENT AWARDED, IN THIS CASE BY REDUCING BY HALF THE RATE AT WHICH THE PROTESTING PRISONERS FORFEITED REMISSION. FOR THOSE PRISONERS WHO HAD ENDED PROTEST ACTION ALTOGETHER SINCE THE PREVIOUS HUNGER STRIKE, THE PRISON AUTHORITIES HAD ALREADY, AS THEY HAD UNDERTAKEN, COMPLETED A REVIEW OF REMISSION AND, WHERE THE PRISONER CONCERNED HAD BY A PERIOD OF CONFORMING BEHAVIOUR SHOWN THAT HIS DECISION TO CEASE HIS PROTEST WAS A FIRM ONE, RESTORED SOME OF THE REMISSION PREVIOUSLY FORFEITED.'

CARRINGTON  
DISTRIBUTION  
FCO/WHITEHALL  
RID

*copies sent  
to D/Industry*

UNCLASSIFIED

10308 - 2

OO WASHINGTON DESKBY 141400Z  
OO BIS NEW YORK DESKBY 141400Z  
OO CG NEW YORK DESKBY 141400Z  
OO CG BOSTON DESKBY 141400Z

*hs  
vmt*

GRS650

UNCLASSIFIED

DESKBY 141400Z WASHINGTON  
DESKBY 141400Z BIS NEW YORK  
DESKBY 141400Z CG NEW YORK  
DESKBY 141400Z CG BOSTON  
DESKBY 141400Z NIO BELFAST  
DESKBY 141400Z DUBLIN

FM FCO 141101Z MAY 81

TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON

TELEGRAM NUMBER 727 OF 14 MAY

AND TO IMMEDIATE DESKBY 141400Z BIS NEW YORK, CONSULATE-GENERAL  
NEW YORK, CONSULATE-GENERAL BOSTON, NIO BELFAST, DUBLIN

MIPT

BEGINS

1. I AM WRITING TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR MESSAGE OF 6 MAY. I  
WELCOME YOUR CLEAR RESTATEMENT OF YOUR UNEQUIVOCAL CONDEMNATION  
OF ALL VIOLENCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND. I WELCOME TOO YOUR EFFORTS  
TO DISCOURAGE AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR THE MEN OF VIOLENCE IN  
NORTHERN IRELAND AND TO PROMOTE BETTER UNDERSTANDING AMONG ALL  
THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND.

2. YOU QUESTION A 'POSTURE OF INFLEXIBILITY' THAT MUST LEAD  
INEVITABLY TO MORE VIOLENCE AND DEATH IN NORTHERN IRELAND. BUT  
THAT IS (NEXT WORD UNDERLINED) NOT THE GOVERNMENT'S POSTURE.  
IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN  
US. I AM THEREFORE SENDING YOU WITH THIS A FULL ACCOUNT OF  
WHAT HAS HAPPENED IN THE MAZE PRISON SINCE THE PROTESTERS'  
COMPLAINTS WERE INVESTIGATED BY AN INDEPENDENT INTERNATIONAL  
BODY, THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

3. THIS FULL ACCOUNT SHOWS THAT HM GOVERNMENT HAS IN FACT  
ACTED WITH GREAT FLEXIBILITY. WE HAVE OFFERED A SERIES OF

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

10308 - 2

IMPROVEMENTS IN CONDITIONS TO ALL PRISONERS - MOST OF WHICH THE PROTESTERS HAVE REJECTED. WE HAVE ALSO FACILITATED VISITS TO THE HUNGER STRIKERS BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, BY MEMBERS OF THE DUBLIN PARLIAMENT, BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION HERE AND BY THE PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE POPE. NONE OF THESE ACTIONS HAS HAD ANY EFFECT UPON THE PRISONERS, WHOSE SOLE PURPOSE IS TO ESTABLISH A POLITICAL JUSTIFICATION FOR THEIR APPALLING RECORD OF MURDER AND VIOLENCE.

4. THE PRISONERS, AND THOSE WHO SPEAK FOR THEM, CLAIM THAT THE PROTESTS ARE (NEXT WORD UNDERLINED) NOT ABOUT PRISON CONDITIONS, BUT (NEXT WORD UNDERLINED) ARE ABOUT THE DEMAND FOR POLITICAL STATUS. POLITICAL STATUS WOULD MEAN THAT THE PRISONERS, NOT THE PRISON AUTHORITIES, WOULD DETERMINE WHAT THE DAY TO DAY REGIME WITHIN THE PRISON SHOULD BE. ON THIS THE GOVERNMENT WILL NOT COMPROMISE. IT IS NOT PREPARED, THROUGH THE GRANTING OF POLITICAL STATUS, TO LEGITIMISE CRIMINAL ACTS UNDERTAKEN IN PURSUIT OF POLITICAL ENDS. IT IS NOT PREPARED TO SURRENDER CONTROL OF THE PRISONS. IT IS NOT PREPARED TO BE COERCED BY PROTEST ACTION, IN WHATEVER FORM, INTO CHANGES FOR WHICH THERE IS NO JUSTIFICATION ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS. WE KNOW FROM EXPERIENCE THAT TO DO SO WOULD NOT BRING THE PROTESTS TO AN END. ON THE CONTRARY, YIELDING TO COERCION WOULD PROVOKE FURTHER COERCION, AND WOULD ENCOURAGE MORE YOUNG PEOPLE TO FOLLOW THE PATH OF VIOLENCE.

5. IT IS THE GOVERNMENT'S PROFOUND HOPE THAT THERE WILL BE NO MORE DEATHS DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY DUE TO THE PRESENT HUNGER STRIKE. SUCH DEATHS CAN SERVE NO PURPOSE. IF POLITICAL STATUS REMAINS THE PROTESTERS' OBJECTIVE, THEN IT CANNOT AND WILL NOT BE CONCEDED. IF THEY HAVE OTHER GROUNDS FOR COMPLAINT AGAINST THE PRISON REGIME, THEN FURTHER RECOURSE TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS REMAINS AVAILABLE TO THEM. THE GOVERNMENT HAS SHOWN THAT IT IS PREPARED TO RESPOND TO THE COMMISSION'S FINDINGS AND TO FACILITATE IN ANY WAY IT CAN THE COMMISSION'S CONDUCT OF ITS INVESTIGATIONS.

6. MORE WIDELY, THE GOVERNMENT REMAINS COMMITTED TO THE SEARCH

UNCLASSIFIED

10303 - 2

FOR WAYS IN WHICH THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND CAN ASSUME  
GREATER RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR OWN AFFAIRS, THROUGH POLITICAL  
INSTITUTIONS IN WHICH ALL SECTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY CAN HAVE  
CONFIDENCE. IT BELIEVES THAT THE BEST HOPE FOR LONG TERM PEACE  
AND STABILITY IS TO BE FOUND IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS, NOT IN  
VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION. AND THE GOVERNMENT REMAINS DETERMINED  
TO BUILD ON THE UNIQUE RELATIONSHIP THAT ALREADY EXISTS BETWEEN  
THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND, TO THE BENEFIT OF  
ALL THE PEOPLES OF THESE ISLANDS.

ENDS

CARRINGTON

DISTRIBUTION:-

FCC/WHITEHALL

RID

3

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

10307 - 2

OO WASHINGTON DESKBY 141400Z  
OO BIS NEW YORK DESKBY 141400Z  
OO CG NEW YORK DESKBY 141400Z  
OO CG BOSTON DESKBY 141400Z

*Ly*  
*Am*

GRS132

UNCLASSIFIED

DESKBY 141400Z WASHINGTON  
DESKBY 141400Z BIS NEW YORK  
DESKBY 141400Z CG NEW YORK  
DESKBY 141400Z CG BOSTON  
DESKBY 141400Z DUBLIN

DESKBY 141400Z NIO BELFAST

FM FCO 141059Z MAY 81

TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON

TELEGRAM NUMBER 726 OF 14 MAY

INFO IMMEDIATE DESKBY 141400Z BIS NEW YORK, CONSULATE-GENERAL  
NEW YORK, CONSULATE-GENERAL BOSTON, NIO BELFAST, DUBLIN  
YOUR TELNOS. 1409, 1410, 1430 AND 1431 : MESSAGE FROM FOUR  
HORSEMEN

1. MY 2 IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING TELEGRAMS CONTAIN THE TEXT OF A  
REPLY FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO THE FOUR HORSEMEN'S MESSAGE  
AND THE TEXT OF THE ANNEX TO IT. PLEASE ARRANGE FOR IMMEDIATE  
DELIVERY.

2. NO.10 WILL BE DRAWING ON IT THIS MORNING, LONDON TIME. THE  
EXCHANGE IS BEING TRANSMITTED IN THE VERBATIM SERIES TO ALL POSTS  
AS A MAJOR STATEMENT OF GOVERNMENT POLICY.

CARRINGTON

DISTRIBUTION:-

FCO/WHITEHALL

RID

UNCLASSIFIED

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,  
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

Michael Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1

13 May 1981

(1)

Dear Michael

Prime Minister

Agree with?

Yes no

Am

REPLY TO THE FOUR HORSEMEN

I sent you yesterday a draft reply which my Secretary of State had approved to the message from the Four Horsemen referred to in your letter of 7 May. As you know, the FCO raised a number of objections to that draft reply. These have now been ironed out, and I attach a revised version which has FCO blessing. I should be grateful if you could get the Prime Minister's rapid approval for this message to be sent to Washington for transmission to the Four Horsemen in time for it to be published this afternoon.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to Roderick Lyne (FCO).

Yours sincerely  
Mike Hopkins

M W HOPKINS

mh

E.R.

Northern Ireland

DRAFT REPLY

(attached)

1. I am writing to thank you for your message of 6 May. I welcome your clear restatement of your unequivocal condemnation of all violence in Northern Ireland. I welcome too your efforts to discourage American support for the men of violence in Northern Ireland and to promote better understanding among all the people of Ireland.

2. You question a "posture of inflexibility" that must lead inevitably to more violence and death in Northern Ireland. But that is not the Government's posture. It is important that there should be no misunderstanding between us. I am therefore sending you with this a full account of what has happened in the Maze prison since the protesters' complaints were investigated by an independent international body, the European Commission of Human Rights.

3. This full account shows that <sup>Government</sup> HM/ has in fact acted with great flexibility. We have offered a series of improvements in conditions to all prisoners - most of which the protesters have rejected. We have also facilitated visits to the hunger strikers by the European Commission of Human Rights, by members of the Dublin Parliament, by the representative of the official Opposition here and by the personal representative of the Pope. None of these actions has had any effect upon the prisoners, whose sole purpose is to establish a political justification for their appalling record of murder and violence - murder & violence which deserve the same total

condemnation in N. Ireland <sup>as</sup> they would get in the United States.

E.R.

4. The prisoners, and those who speak for them, claim that the protests are not about prison conditions, but are about the demand for political status. Political status would mean that the prisoners, not the prison authorities, would determine what the day to day regime within the prison should be. On this the Government will not compromise. It is not prepared, through the granting of political status, to legitimise criminal acts undertaken in pursuit of political ends. It is not prepared to surrender control of the prisons. It is not prepared to be coerced by protest action, in whatever form, into changes for which there is no justification on humanitarian grounds. We know from experience that to do so would not bring the protests to an end. On the contrary, yielding to coercion would provoke further coercion, and would encourage more young people to follow the path of violence.

5. It is the Government's profound hope that there will be no more deaths directly or indirectly due to the present hunger strike. Such deaths can serve no purpose. If political status remains the protesters' objective, then it cannot and will not be conceded. If they have other grounds for complaint against the prison regime, then further recourse to the European Commission of Human Rights remains available to them. The Government has shown that it is prepared to respond to the Commission's findings and to facilitate in any way it can the Commission's conduct of its investigations.

6. More widely, the Government remains committed to the search for ways in which the people of Northern Ireland can assume greater responsibility for their own affairs, through political institutions in which all sections of the community can have confidence. It believes that the best hope for long term peace and stability is to be found in the political process, not in violence and intimidation. And the Government remains determined to build on the unique relationship that already exists between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, to the benefit of all the peoples of these islands.



**E.R.**

1. In 1978 the European Commission of Human Rights considered the situation at the Maze Prison in the context of an application made to the Commission by four prisoners.
2. The prisoners' main complaint was that their right to freedom of conscience and belief (under Article 9 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms) was denied them because the prison authorities sought to apply to them the normal prison regime. The Commission in their decision of June 1980 found that a right to preferential status for a certain category of prisoners was not amongst those guaranteed by the Convention or by Article 9 in particular.
3. The applicants also argued that the regime under which they lived amounted to inhuman and degrading treatment and punishment in breach of Article 3 of the Convention. The Commission declared that all their complaints under this Article were inadmissible on the grounds that they were "manifestly ill-founded". At that stage many of the prisoners were, as you know, conducting a uniquely disgusting form of protest in which they fouled their cells with food and excreta. They had broken up furniture in their cells and had used it to damage the windows and other fittings. The European Commission recognised that these conditions were self-inflicted. The prison authorities, of course, made arrangements for the cells to be cleaned and repainted at frequent intervals.
4. But among their other findings the Commission emphasised the prison authorities' duty "to keep under constant review

their reaction to recalcitrant prisoners engaged in a developing and protracted protest" and commented that "efforts should have been made by the authorities to ensure that the applicants could avail of certain facilities such as taking regular exercise in the open air with some form of clothing (other than prison clothing) and making greater use of the prison amenities under similar conditions". It also said that "arrangements should have been made to enable the applicants to consult outside medical specialists even though they were not prepared to wear prison uniform or underwear."

5. Thus the prisoners' claim for political or special status has been investigated recently and decisively rejected by an independent authority of the highest standing; the conditions at the Maze Prison were covered as part of the Commission's investigation and no serious complaint against them was sustained, and the Commission did not, where it felt necessary, hesitate to criticise the Government and the prison authorities.

6. These criticisms were respected and new arrangements to satisfy them have been in force for more than a year. That is not all. During the course of 1980 the protesting prisoners were offered, whether or not they ended their protest, a range of improved conditions in connection with letters, visits, recreation, association and compassionate leave. In October last year the Government ended prison uniform as such in Northern Ireland prisons in favour of the issue of civilian-type clothing in a range of colours and styles. Of these measures, the protesting prisoners had, by the beginning of March this year, made use in some cases of the facility of additional visits

to relatives in ill-health. Apart from that there has been no response.

7. The first hunger strike ended on December 18, 1980. Contrary to what has been alleged, no undertakings were given to the hunger strikers or the remaining protesting prisoners at that time, before it or after: what the Government had sought to do was to explain to all protesting prisoners what facilities and opportunities were available to them within the existing prison regime, which, as was also made clear to them, the Government is committed to maintaining and, as circumstances allow, improving. That explanation stands and the same facilities remain available. When the ending of the first hunger strike failed to lead to the ending of the other protests, the prison authorities, with the full backing of the Government, took the initiative to move 96 of the protesting prisoners into clean cells. When it became clear that those prisoners had stopped fouling their cells, normal cell furniture was provided.

8. This process completed, the next step towards a conforming regime was the issue of the civilian-type clothing. The prisoners refused this, saying that they were not prepared to wear it unless their own clothing was provided at the same time: and that they would take part in no work other than that of cleaning their own cells and receiving full-time education. (The Commission had, incidentally, said in its findings that it did not consider there to be anything inherently degrading or objectionable about the requirement to wear a prison uniform or to work). The Government had no choice but to say it could not accept these conditions. The prisoners'

response, on 27 January, was to smash the furniture they had been given and to damage the fabric of their cells.

9. On March 2 the prisoners engaged in the "dirty" protest at the Maze, and at Armagh, said they were ending this form of protest, but were doing so not as a step towards conformity with the prison regime but in support of the hunger strike which had then just begun. The Government nevertheless welcomed the prisoners' decision to end the conditions that they had imposed upon themselves: the prisoners were transferred to clean cells as quickly as the necessary arrangements could be made: and when they asked for the issue of furniture this was, notwithstanding the actions of January 27, initiated. As in January, the prison authorities responded to this scaling down of protest action by scaling down the punishment awarded, in this case by reducing by half the rate at which the protesting prisoners forfeited remission. For those prisoners who had ended protest action altogether since the previous hunger strike, the prison authorities had already, as they had undertaken, completed a review of remission and, where the prisoner concerned had by a period of conforming behaviour shown that his decision to cease his protest was a firm one, restored some of the remission previously forfeited.

13 May 1981

MR ALEXANDER

THE HUNGER STRIKERS AND JOHN HUME

A subject right outside my remit, and about which I know nothing; but that doesn't stop me dropping you a simple thought which can't possibly be new.

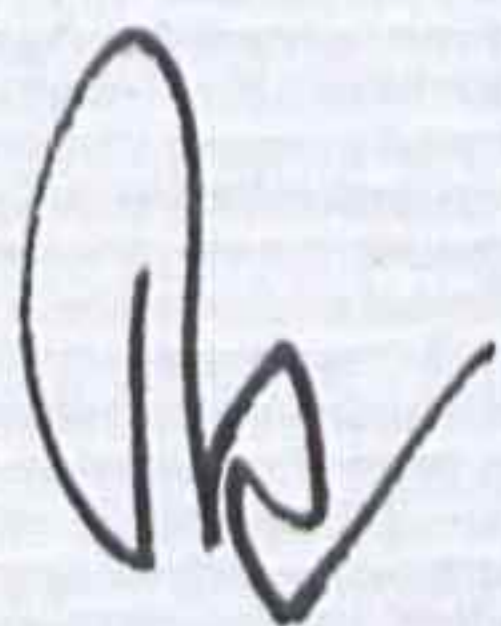
Listening to John Hume on the radio as I drove in this morning, I was struck by the illogical nature of his argument, no doubt presented in good faith.

He was saying that the whole business of the hunger striking was really now "about words"; in other words, a huge and tragic political problem all centring round whether or not the prisoners can wear their own clothes as women are apparently allowed to do. The point I am making is obvious: if the British Government is getting the whole thing out of proportion and showing "intransigence" etc by sticking absolutely to the letter of the rules even though people are committing suicide in protest, are they really being any more unreasonable than the people who are prepared to commit suicide (or are prepared to instruct those people to commit suicide) over this same apparently trivial issue?

*"If the Government could be a little bit more flexible, the problem could be resolved."*

This obvious symmetry in the situation never seems to be picked up by the commentators and thrown back at the people they are interviewing. It appears reasonable to fast to the death in order to wear a checked shirt; unreasonable to refuse that request.

The other point that never seems to come up is "What would happen if, after receiving this concession, the prisoners make a further (and presumably more substantive) demand?"



JOHN HOSKYNS

UNCLASSIFIED

10277 - 1

*he*  
*Shul*

OO UKMIS NEW YORK

OC WASHINGTON

GRS 280

UNCLASSIFIED

FM FCO

TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON

TELEGRAM NUMBER 722 OF 13 MAY

AND TO IMMEDIATE UKMIS NEW YORK AND IMMEDIATE EC POSTS  
REPEATED FOR INFO: PRIORITY UKDEL NATO, BERNE, MADRID, LISBON,  
OSLO, MOSCOW, STOCKHOLM, HOLY SEE, UKDEL STRASBOURG.

MYTEL 715 : ANGLO-GERMAN SUMMIT

1. FOLLOWING ARE EXTRACTS ON NORTHERN IRELAND FROM THE JOINT  
PRESS CONFERENCE GIVEN BY THE PRIME MINISTER AND CHANCELLOR  
SCHMIDT ON 12 MAY:-

BEGINS

QUESTION : CHANCELLOR, WHY NOT HAVE A EUROPEAN INITIATIVE ON  
WHAT IS HAPPENING IN IRELAND, CALLING ON THE IRA TO ASSOCIATE  
ITSELF WITH WHAT IS HAPPENING. THESE ARE TWO COUNTRIES OF  
EUROPE.

PRIME MINISTER : NORTHERN IRELAND IS PART OF THE UNITED KINGDOM,  
THE UNITED KINGDOM IS PART OF THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY,  
THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND IS PART OF THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC  
COMMUNITY. WE ARE SOVEREIGN STATES, EACH OF US, THE UNITED  
KINGDOM AND THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND AND THE COMMUNITY DOES NOT  
INTERFERE IN INTERNAL MATTERS IN ONE ANOTHER'S COUNTRIES.

CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT : MARGARET, WOULD YOU ALLOW ME TO MAKE AN  
ADDITIONAL REMARK HERE, BECAUSE THERE HAS BEEN A MISUNDER-  
STANDING A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO AT THE OCCASION OF A VISIT OF  
PRIME MINISTER HAUGHEY AT BONN. AT THAT OCCASION, I SAID THAT  
I WELCOMED THAT THE DIFFICULTIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND NOW HAD  
BECOME AN INTERNATIONAL MATTER. THIS WAS BEING MISUNDERSTOOD  
AND PERHAPS I WAS AT FAULT TO USE THAT EXPRESSION. WHAT I  
MEANT WAS AND THE SENSE WAS THAT I WELCOMED THE FACT THAT THE  
GOVERNMENTS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

1

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

10277 - 1

WERE IN CONTACT ABOUT IT - IN CLOSER AND MORE INTENSIFIED CONTACT - NOWADAYS THAN FORMERLY AND THIS, I THINK, IS A GOOD DEVELOPMENT.

ENDS

CARRINGTON

NORTHERN IRELAND LIMITED

RID  
NAD  
INFORMATION DEPT  
WED  
MAED  
NEWS DEPT  
SECURITY DEPT  
FUSD  
PS  
PS/LPS  
PS/MR HURD

PS/MR RIDLEY  
PS/MR BLAKER  
PS/FUS  
SIR A ACLAND  
CHIEF CLERK  
MR ADAMS  
MR BULLARD  
MR FERGUSSON  
LORD N G LENNOX  
MR BRAITHEWAITE

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION  
NORTHERN IRELAND

SECRET

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

3



Michael Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street  
S W 1

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,  
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

*Overlaid*

*For. Am 15/5 very  
Am not  
then on the  
Article 13 point.  
otherwise you'd  
not*

13 May 1981

①

*Prime Minister*

*Dear Michael,*

*Would you be content for me to speak  
along the lines of this letter to Mr Nally?*

*Andy*

You telephoned me yesterday and reported a conversation you had with Dermot Nally in the Taoiseach's office about the hunger strike in the Maze prison. I understand that in addition Nally has since been in touch with Robert Armstrong.

13/5

The possibility that we should ourselves try to involve the European Commission of Human Rights (ECHR) is one that we thought of, and investigated, before the death of Bobby Sands. As far as solving the Northern Ireland prison problem is concerned, we should be more than willing, if it were possible, to find some way in which by our initiative the Commission could be brought in, whether to consider, as the Taoiseach has suggested, the accusation that we failed to honour undertakings alleged to have been given at the end of the last hunger strike, or to examine how far the British authorities have or have not responded to the Commission's own observations in their Report last year that we had been unduly inflexible in dealing with the developing protest in the prisons.

There might, on broader grounds, be objections to seeking to widen the scope of the Commission's functions, even informally, in this way; but in the event such objections have not had to be weighed. Our understanding is that there is no way, under the Convention, in which the Commission can be activated save by the receipt by them of a complaint alleging that someone's rights under the Convention have been infringed by a signatory Government; and as we saw in the case of Sands, an application made by someone other than the injured party immediately fails if that party declines to "adopt" the complaint.

*(Mentioned  
this afternoon  
by Mr Atkin's)  
Andy*

However, since Nally's telephone calls, we have had further strictly private contact with the Commission to see whether any way forward can be found. There appears to be one possibility. You will recall that the Decision issued in June 1980 by the Commission on the admissibility of the case brought by four prisoners in the Maze was a partial one because it left two elements in the original complaints unsettled. One of these, relating to correspondence, is not relevant for the present purpose. The other was a complaint under Article 13 that the

.../2.

SECRET



SECRET

.../

prisoners had no "effective remedy before a national authority"; and this the Commission left open for further consideration because it raised wider issues, and was less urgent. The formal position on that part of the complaint is that the Commission are awaiting observations on admissibility from the applicants. It is just possible that a way may be found, using this unfinished part of the Commission's business as a hook, for the Commission to be reactivated. We are looking at this urgently but cannot be sure that it will work.

..... We have also looked at the possibility of action under Article 57 of the Convention (copy attached). This envisaged action being initiated by the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe; but it does not involve the Commission in any way, and it would not appear to be particularly apt for this purpose - it has, we understand, only been used perhaps three times in the last twenty years, and then only for the purpose of obtaining information from all member states, not just one. We understand that the Secretary-General of the Council would not favour its use in relation to a single country. It offers only a question-and-answer procedure, not the kind of on-the-spot investigation which a complaint to the Commission might involve. We doubt very much whether it would be likely to have any impact at all on the current position at the Maze.

You may wish to clear this line with the Prime Minister. Subject to her views, you should speak to Dermot Nally in this sense as soon as possible.

I am sending copies of this letter to Roderick Lyne (FCO), and to David Wright (Cabinet Office).

*Yours sincerely  
Mike Hopkins*

M W HOPKINS

SECRET

**E.R.**

SECTION V

ARTICLE 57

ON RECEIPT OF A REQUEST FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE  
COUCIL OF EUROPE ANY HIGH CONTRACTING PARTY SHALL FURNISH  
AN EXPLANATION OF THE MANNER IN WHICH ITS INTERNAL LAW  
ENSURES THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATIONS OF ANY OF THE PROVISIONS  
OF THIS CONVENTION.

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

*Briefing seen by*



CONFIDENTIAL

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,  
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

Michael Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1

13 May 1981

*Dear Michael,*

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH MR JOHN HUME MEP, 13 MAY.

... I enclose a brief for the Prime Minister's meeting with John Hume this evening.

Mr Hume asked the NIO at the end of last week if we would facilitate a meeting between him and the Prime Minister. He then told the press that he had sought such a meeting. On the Secretary of State's instructions, Roy Harrington told him on 11 May that by leaking his request he had put us in a false position which he would have to regularise by approaching you direct. This he did.

Mr Hume told us that he wanted to discuss with the Prime Minister his "two points" for ending the hunger strike. (These are explained in the background attached to the brief). We told him firmly that a discussion on these lines with the Prime Minister would serve no useful purpose. He then proposed a general talk, citing the Prime Minister's invitation to him during her visit here in March to come to see her whenever he was worried about the situation in the Province. It is on this basis that the meeting is to take place.

The Secretary of State hopes that it will be possible for Ministers to have a general discussion very soon on the way ahead in Northern Ireland, embracing the Anglo-Irish Joint Studies as well as the hunger strike itself. We hope that in the meantime the Prime Minister will find the line in the speaking notes attached acceptable.

On the general situation in the Province, you will have a copy of the minute to the Prime Minister on 12 May.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to David Wright (Cabinet Office).

*Yours sincerely*  
*M W Hopkins*  
M W HOPKINS

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

BRIEF FOR PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH MR JOHN HUME, MEP

## Points to Make

### Hunger Strike

1. We cannot concede a special status for prisoners convicted of terrorist offences. To do so would give a boost to Provisional recruiting, risk a severe Protestant reaction and destroy the essential position that they are criminals, not prisoners of war.
2. It is neither accurate nor helpful to say that if only the Government could "be flexible", the hunger strike issue could be solved. The Provisionals stated at the beginning and end of Sands' fast, and have restated since, that they want all five demands. This to everyone can only mean a special, political status. The Provisionals have coldly decided that the deaths of Sands and colleagues are necessary for their ends. It is they who are inflexible, not the Government.
3. We have shown flexibility in the changes introduced last year, in our attempts to de-escalate the dirty protest in January, and in our response to the ending of the dirty protest in March (when in spite of the fact that this move was explicitly in support of the hunger strike, we moved prisoners as quickly as possible into clean cells, cut the rate they lose remission by half, and started to issue furniture when they asked for it - this notwithstanding the fact that some of the same prisoners did so much damage last January). We allowed the 3 Dublin MEPs (Blaney, de Valera and O'Connell) the ECHR representatives, the Pope's representative and the Labour Party spokesman (Mr Concannon) to visit the Maze in the hope that they could find some way to persuade Sands to come to a solution. I hope the hunger strikers will even now respond to the Pope's plea.

CONFIDENTIAL

...../2

CONFIDENTIAL

4. We are publicly committed to maintaining an enlightened and humanitarian regime for all prisoners in Northern Ireland, and to improving the regime where there are good grounds for so doing and where the resources and the need for security permit. But what the protesters want is a special separate regime which gives them a differentiated status.

5. We are prepared, as always, to listen to representations from responsible quarters on all aspects of the environment for all conforming prisoners. We are prepared to give the ECHR all facilities (though we cannot initiate a complaint against ourselves) and told them so before they responded to Sands' complaint.

Mr Hume's Own Proposals.

6. I know that you put forward two ideas last December [that prisoners could if they wished buy the prison issue clothing so as to be able to call it their own, and that they should be allowed to move freely within their wings] but it is quite clear from what has happened since then that these changes - even if they were acceptable in their own right and there are in fact objections to both - would not have provided an enduring solution to the protests. On the contrary, by conceding part of what is on demand the Government might well be, and be seen to be, encouraging further coercion. Events in 1972 (introduction of special category) showed that political status encourages support for terrorism.

Reaction in Nationalists Areas.

7. HMG has been much heartened by the calls of many responsible community leaders to calm, restraint and understanding. The security forces enjoy the full confidence of the Government in their handling of the violence there has been. Nevertheless welcome Mr Hume's own appreciation of the situation. How might the Catholic community react to further hunger strike deaths? Have the issues been made clear: and if not are there better ways of doing so?

CONFIDENTIAL

**CONFIDENTIAL**

The Way Forward.

8. We are thinking carefully how to proceed. We want to be able to offer a political way forward, not only in order to demonstrate the negative nature of the hunger strike, but to encourage people in the Province to think constructively about the future and to choose the peaceful and democratic option. The local elections on 20 May and the Anglo-Irish Joint Studies should help this process.

Anglo-Irish Joint Studies.

9. Officials are working on lines agreed between Mr Haughey and myself in December. It is important for all of us in the UK to develop our friendship with the Republic not only because of our mutual concern over Northern Ireland, but because we have very many bilateral interests in common.

Local Elections (defensive).

10. To postpone the local elections on 20 May would be a surrender to the Provisionals. It would put off the next step in the political process, which we want to restart. And it would make the SDLP appear the tools of the Government, which Mr Hume cannot want.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

BACKGROUND NOTES:

Hunger Strike

1. The talking points are largely self-explanatory. Mr Hume is likely to press the Prime Minister to make some concession to the hunger strikers, in order to encourage a solution. Last weekend, the press reported him as saying that if the "own clothes" and "free association" issues could be resolved, then the hunger strike could be brought to an end.
2. The protesters have, however, made it clear, time and time again, that the central issue is not about prison conditions but about political status. The Government has introduced improvements in the kind of matters - clothing, letters and parcels, remission - which are alleged by some to be what the hunger strikers are concerned about. Despite this, the five demands - which would involve a severe loss of control by the prison authorities and a prisoner-of-war type regime appropriate to political status - still stand. They are the rights to:-
  - (a) free association (ie to mingle freely in the prison wings or blocks with prisoners of their own choosing);
  - (b) own clothing;
  - (c) avoid prison work;
  - (d) increased visits and letters privileges;
  - (e) full restoration of lost remission.
3. These claims cannot be conceded since it is not a matter of flexibility but a matter of principle. This cannot be fudged.
4. Sands died on 5 May, on the sixty-sixth day of his hunger strike. Francis Hughes died yesterday: McCreesh and O'Hara will be on their fifty-third day. They should survive until later next week.

...../2

**CONFIDENTIAL**

CONFIDENTIAL

Local Elections

5. Individual members of the SDLP (including Mr Hume) were complaining bitterly last week that if the local elections were to go ahead as planned on 20 May, their vote (and that of the moderate Unionist parties) would suffer: increased polarisation between the communities would favour independent "green" Republicans and Mr Paisley's DUP. The arguments against such a postponement are briefly set out in the speaking notes. NIO have considered the question and are firmly in favour of going ahead. There are signs that this view is now beginning to prevail in the SDLP too, though Mr Hume may conceivably raise the point.

6. Mr Hume may not know, but we do, that PSF have put up some candidates of their own under cover of the other labels.

CONFIDENTIAL



GRS 436

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

FM PARIS 131725Z MAY 81

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 356 OF 13 MAY 1981

FRANCE AND NORTHERN IRELAND

1. I GATHER THAT THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT THE FAMILIES OF HUNGER STRIKERS IN NORTHERN IRELAND MAY TRY TO APPEAL TO M. MITTERRAND FOR SYMPATHY AND/OR SUPPORT.

2. I CALLED THIS AFTERNOON ON MME NEIERTZ, THE SECRETARY FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY AND MEMBER OF M. MITTERRAND'S INNER POLITICAL COUNCIL. AT THE END OF OUR TALK SHE HERSELF RAISED THE QUESTION OF NORTHERN IRELAND, REMINDING ME THAT SHE HAD LED A PS DELEGATION TO THE EMBASSY RECENTLY TO RAISE THE BOBBY SANDS CASE (PARA. 3 OF MY TELNO 329). THIS ENABLED ME TO TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO TELL HER THAT THERE WERE NO POLITICAL PRISONERS IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND TO WARN HER THAT THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF POLITICAL STATUS BEING GIVEN TO IRA PRISONERS. I REMINDED HER THAT NORTHERN IRELAND WAS A PART OF GREAT BRITAIN AS CORSICA AND THE DEPARTEMENTS D'OUTRE MER ARE PARTS OF FRANCE, AND THAT NORTHERN IRELAND HAS BEEN PART OF GREAT BRITAIN FOR LONGER THAN SOME OF THE PROVINCES OF MAINLAND FRANCE HAVE BELONGED TO FRANCE. I ASKED HER IF SHE THOUGHT IT WAS CONCEIVABLE THAT A FRENCH GOVERNMENT WOULD GRANT POLITICAL STATUS TO CORSICAN, BRETON OR BASQUE TERRORISTS. SHE COMMENTED THAT FRANCE OUGHT PERHAPS TO SET AN EXAMPLE, BUT SHE SAID THIS IN A WAY WHICH MADE IT CLEAR THAT SHE DID NOT IMAGINE THAT THE INCOMING GOVERNMENT WOULD BE MAKING CONCESSIONS ON THIS FRONT. I TOLD HER THAT AS LONG AS FRANCE OFFERED NONE OF ITS PRISONERS POLITICAL STATUS NO - ONE IN THIS COUNTRY HAD ANY RIGHT TO PRESS FOR POLITICAL STATUS FOR ANYONE IN BRITISH PRISONS. SHE DID NOT DISAGREE.

3. THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY WHO WAS WITH HER OBJECTED TO THE FACT THAT THE EMBASSY HAD CLAIMED PUBLICLY THAT THOSE WHO PROTESTED ABOUT THE BOBBY SANDS CASE BELONGED TO THE COMMUNIST PARTY. I REPLIED THAT WHAT WE HAD SAID WAS THAT OVER 90% OF THE PROTESTS WHICH THE EMBASSY HAD RECEIVED HAD COME FROM MEMBERS OR ORGANS OF THE PCF AND CGT. THE STATISTICS WERE IRREFUTABLE. I REMARKED THAT IT WAS PERHAPS VERY FOOLISH OF THE IRA TO HAVE SOUGHT OR ACCEPTED COMMUNIST PARTY SPONSORSHIP IN FRANCE, BUT IT SHOWED WHAT BAD COMPANY THEY WERE. HE AND MME NEIERTZ AGREED WITH THIS ASPECT OF THE ARGUMENT.

CONFIDENTIAL

14

CONFIDENTIAL

4. IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES I THINK THAT WE HAVE DONE ENOUGH TO ENSURE THAT THOSE CLOSE TO M. MITTERRAND ARE AWARE OF THE DANGERS OF BECOMING SUCKED INTO THE NORTHERN IRELAND PROBLEM AND I WOULD NOT FOR THE MOMENT SUGGEST ANY FURTHER REPRESENTATIONS TO THEM. IF DEFINITE NEWS BECOMES AVAILABLE THAT PERSONS IN NORTHERN IRELAND ARE GOING TO APPROACH M. MITTERRAND, I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR EARLY INFORMATION SO THAT WE CAN CONSIDER WHETHER A FURTHER INTERVENTION WITH SOCIALIST PARTY HEADQUARTERS WOULD BE WISE AND TIMELY.

HIBBERT.

NORTHERN IRELAND LIMITED

RID  
NAD  
INFORMATION DEPT  
WED  
MAED  
NEWS DEPT  
SECURITY DEPT  
PUSD  
PS  
PS/LPS  
PS/MR HURD

PS/MR RIDLEY  
PS/MR BLAKER  
PS/PUS  
SIR A ACLAND  
CHIEF CLERK  
MR ADAMS  
MR BULLARD  
MR FERGUSSON  
LORD N G LENNOX  
MR BRAITHEWAITE

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION  
NORTHERN IRELAND

2

CONFIDENTIAL

TOR 11357/13H.

⊕5⊕⊕⊕5  
27582 CABOFF G⊕5⊕  
27582 CABOFF G

TELEGRAM-BY-TELEX

ARA COELI  
ARMAGH

13 MAY 1981

RT. HON MARGARET THATCHER, M.P.  
PRIME MINISTER  
10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON.

DEAR PRIME MINISTER,

HAVING ALREADY APPEALED TO THE HUNGER STRIKERS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS TO GIVE UP THEIR FAST, I NOW REPEAT MY EARNEST REQUEST TO YOU AND THE CABINET TO ABANDON THE INFLEXIBLE POLICY IN NORTHERN IRELAND REGARDING PRISON DRESS AND THE FRATERNISATION OF PRISONERS AT WORK OR RECREATION.

NORTHERN IRELAND, WITH A FIVE-FOLD INCREASE IN <sup>prison</sup>POPULATION, REQUIRES A DIFFERENT APPROACH FROM OTHER AREAS, FOR THE VAST MAJORITY OF ITS PRISONERS 1) ARE VERY YOUNG, 2) COME FROM LAW-ABIDING FAMILIES, 3) HAVE BEEN SENTENCED TO VERY LONG TERMS, 4) DO NOT SHARE THE RELIGION OR NATIONAL IDENTITY OF THEIR JAILERS.

YESTERDAY'S DEATH OF FRANCIS HUGHES IS A FURTHER BLOW TO THE EFFORTS OF ALL TRUE CHRISTIANS HERE TO UPHOLD LOVE OF NEIGHBOUR AS THE SUPREME LAW AND ONLY ADDS FUEL TO THE FIRES OF HATRED AND VIOLENCE. IN GOD'S NAME, DON'T ALLOW ANOTHER DEATH. I BESEECH YOU TO MAKE THE MOVE IMMEDIATELY BY MAKING PRISON DRESS AND WORK OPTIONAL FOR ALL PRISONERS IN NORTHERN IRELAND, AS PRISON DRESS HAS ALREADY BEEN ABANDONED HERE IN ARMAGH PRISON FOR NEARLY A DECADE. SUCH CHANGES WOULD BE WELCOMED BY PRISONERS OF ALL DENOMINATIONS. PLEASE SEND A REPRESENTATIVE TO TALK TO THE PRISONERS' SPOKESMEN AS WAS DONE DURING THE LAST HUNGER STRIKE AND THE DANGER OF FURTHER DEATH CAN BE REMOVED.

CARDINAL TOMAS O FIAICH  
ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH

⊕  
27582 CABOFF G  
31614 CAPO EI

NO N IRELAND: ADVANCE COPIES

17

PS	N IRELAND OFFICE -	PS TO SEC OF STATE
PS/LPS		RM 66 A/2 GGS
PS/PUS	N IRELAND OFFICE	[4 copies]
MR BULLARD		
MR FERGUSSON		SIR K STOWE
HD/RID		MR MORIATY
HD/PUSD (2)		MR MARSHALL
HD/EPD		MR BUXTON
HD/NEWS DEPT	CABINET OFFICE -	SIR R ARMSTRONG
		DIO

.....

NO 10 DOWNING STREET

RESTRICTED

IMMEDIATE

FM DUBLIN 131100Z MAY 1981

ADVANCE COPY

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 155 OF 13 MAY

AND TO IMMEDIATE N I O (BELFAST)

M I P T 2 : HUGHES' DEATH: DEMONSTRATIONS IN DUBLIN.

1. A GROUP OF DEMONSTRATORS CONVENED AT THE G P O IN O'CONNELL STREET LAST NIGHT AND MARCHED , VIA THE DAIL, TO THE CHANCERY SHORTLY AFTER 9 PM WHERE THEY THREW STONES AND BOTTLES AT THE GARDA AND THE CHANCERY. A SMALL NUMBER OF GARDA WERE INJURED AND WERE TAKEN TO HOSPITAL. ONE CHANCERY WINDOW WAS BROKEN.

2. ABOUT 50 GARDA ON DUTY AT CHANCERY BEFORE THE DEMONSTRATION BEGAN WERE REINFORCED BY AT LEAST ANOTHER 100 MEN. SOON AFTER THE CROWD STARTED THROWING MISSILES THE GARDA BATON CHARGED THE CROWD AND DISPERSED THEM. THE CROWD, PURSUED BY GARDA, SMASHED SHOP WINDOWS ON THEIR WAY BACK INTO THE CENTRE OF DUBLIN. SOME FURTHER DAMAGE WAS CAUSED IN TOWN BUT THIS CEASED IN THE EARLY HOURS OF THIS MORNING.

3. I HAVE WRITTEN THE GARDA COMMISSIONER TO THANK HIM FOR THE PROTECTION GIVEN TO THE CHANCERY.

FIGG

PS	N IRELAND OFFICE -	PS TO SEC OF STATE
PS/LPS		RM 66 A/2 GGS
PS/PUS	N IRELAND OFFICE	[4 copies]
MR BULLARD		
MR FERGUSSON		SIR K STOWE
HD/RID		MR MORIATY
HD/PUSD (2)		MR MARSHALL
HD/TPD		MR BUXTON
HD/NEWS DEPT	CABINET OFFICE -	SIR R ARMSTRONG
		DIO

....  
 ....  
 ....

NO 10 DOWNING STREET

**ADVANCE COPY**  
**IMMEDIATE**

~~RESIDENT CLERK~~

GRS 280

UNCLASSIFIED

FM DUBLIN 131100Z MAY 1981

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 156 OF 13 MAY

AND TO IMMEDIATE N I O (BELFAST)

MY TELNO 153 HUGHES' DEATH; STATEMENT BY TAOISEACH.  
 1. FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF THE STATEMENT ISSUED ON 12 MAY FOLLOWING  
 THE DEATH OF FRANCIS HUGHES:

BEGINS

THE HUGHES FAMILY OF BELLAGHY HAVE NOW JOINED THE MANY FAMILIES  
 WHO HAVE SUFFERED BEREAVEMENT OR INJURY IN NORTHERN IRELAND.  
 TO ALL OF THEM I EXTEND MY DEEPEST SYMPATHY. THE LATEST DEATH  
 IN THE H BLOCKS DEMANDS WITH EVER GREATER URGENCY THAN EVER A  
 SOLUTION WHICH WILL BRING THE PRESENT TERRIBLE SITUATION TO AN  
 END. NO IRISH GOVERNMENT CAN BE INDIFFERENT TO THE PROSPECT OF THESE

SOLUTION WHICH WILL BRING THE PRESENT TERRIBLE SITUATION TO AN  
END. NO IRISH GOVERNMENT CAN BE INDIFFERENT TO THE PROSPECT OF THESE  
DEATHS CONTINUING, EVEN BEFORE THE FIRST HUNGER STRIKE AT THE  
H BLOCKS BEGAN AND SINCE THE PRESENT HUNGER STRIKE WAS PROPOSED,  
I HAVE CONSTANTLY MADE KNOWN TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT THE DEEP  
CONCERN AND ANXIETY FELT BY THE IRISH GOVERNMENT AT THE  
DEVELOPING AND HIGHLY DANGEROUS SITUATION AS WE SAW IT, AND  
EMPHASISING THE NEED TO FIND A HUMANITARIAN SOLUTION TO THIS PROBLEM.  
I HAVE AGAIN CONVEYED THAT CONCERN AND ANXIETY TO THE BRITISH  
GOVERNMENT. I HAVE ALSO CONVEYED MY VIEW TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
OF HUMAN RIGHTS THAT THEIR INVOLVEMENT COULD CONTRIBUTE TO A  
SOLUTION. A SOLUTION MUST BE FOUND BUT IT CAN ONLY BE FOUND IF ALL  
THOSE INVOLVED DECIDE IN THE NAME OF HUMANITY THAT IT MUST BE.  
THE TRAGIC EVENTS OF RECENT WEEKS HAVE CONFIRMED ONCE MORE THAT  
NORTHERN IRELAND AS AT PRESENT CONSTITUTED IS NO LONGER A VIABLE  
POLITICAL ENTITY. A NEW POLITICAL ARRANGEMENT IS THE ONLY POSSIBLE  
WAY FORWARD TO PEACE. A POLITICAL SOLUTION ACCEPTABLE TO ALL IS  
THE ONLY MEANS OF BRINGING THIS GRIM CYCLE OF VIOLENCE, DESTRUCTION  
AND DEATH TO AN END.

I APPEAL TO IRISH PEOPLE IN EVERY PART OF THIS ISLAND BY THEIR  
BEHAVIOUR IN THESE DIFFICULT DAYS TO UPHOLD THE HONOUR AND DIGNITY  
OF IRELAND AND TO LET NO-ONE FOR WHATEVER MOTIVE USE THIS TRAGIC  
SITUATION TO CAUSE FURTHER SUFFERING AND DAMAGE TO OUR  
GOOD NAME IN THE EYES OF THE WORLD.

ENDS

FIGG

NNNN

SENT QT / RECD AT 13/1340 Z DH/V RK

CONFIDENTIAL

DESKBY 140900Z

FM WASHINGTON 132302Z MAY 81

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1472 OF 13 MAY 1981,

INFO IMMEDIATE N I O (LONDON), N I O (BELFAST)

PRIORITY DUBLIN, B I S NEW YORK.

M I P T

NORTHERN IRELAND: U S T V AND RADIO COVERAGE

1. FROM THE BEGINNING OF LAST WEEK, WITH THE THREE COMMERCIAL TV NETWORKS LINING UP NUMEROUS STAFF IN BELFAST FOR THE DEATH OF SANDS, WHICH OCCURRED LESS THAN AN HOUR AFTER MY INTERVIEW ON THE MCNEIL-LEHRER REPORT (PUBLIC BROADCASTING NETWORK), TELEVISION COVERAGE ABOUT N. IRELAND WAS THE MOST EXTENSIVE FOR SEVERAL YEARS.
2. THE IMPACT OF THE NETWORKS' COVERAGE WAS ACCENTUATED BY THE ABSENCE OF ANY OTHER MAJOR EVENT CONSISTENTLY CATCHING ATTENTION. N. IRELAND WAS THE LEADING SINGLE STORY, DOMESTIC OR INTERNATIONAL, OF LAST WEEK - FOR EXAMPLE, A B C'S NIGHTLINE CURRENT AFFAIRS PROGRAMME DEVOTED TWO PROGRAMMES IN FIVE NIGHTS TO THE SUBJECT. ONE OF THESE CARRIED AN INTERVIEW WITH THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF B I S.
3. THE NATIONAL NETWORKS GENERALLY MADE SOME ATTEMPT AT BALANCE, ALTHOUGH THIS DID NOT ALWAYS PREVAIL OVER THE PREJUDICES OF INDIVIDUAL REPORTERS: FOR INSTANCE A C B S CORRESPONDENT THOUGHT IT ADEQUATE TO QUALIFY HIS CLAIM THAT "THE EYES OF THE WORLD ARE ON THE HUNGER STRIKE, AND WORLD OPINION SEEMS IN FAVOUR OF THE STRIKERS" WITH THE SUGGESTION THAT "THE PROPAGANDA VICTORY OVER BRITAIN COULD BE LOST IF THERE IS WIDESPREAD VIOLENCE". ALL THE NETWORKS WENT TO SOME LENGTHS TO EMPHASISE THAT THE MUCH PREDICTED VIOLENCE AFTER SANDS' DEATH HAD NOT MATERIALISED, AND POINTED TO THE INVOLVEMENT OF CHILDREN (HIGHLIGHTED IN A SPECIAL REPORT ON A B C'S PRIME TIME MAGAZINE PROGRAMME 20/20) IN ATTACKS ON THE POLICE AND ARMED FORCES. C B S DEMONSTRATED TELLINGLY HOW SOME OF THE PRESS WERE USING CHILDREN TO POSE FOR PHOTOGRAPHS PURPORTEDLY DEPICTING SCENES OF VIOLENCE.
4. THE BRIEF CONFRONTATION IN THE HOUSE BETWEEN THE LABOUR M P, MR DUFFY, AND THE PRIME MINISTER, WAS REPORTED BY THE T V NETWORKS: AND COVERAGE OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S COMMENTS REPLAYED ON ALL THE NETWORKS, TENDED TO DISPLACE THE ATTENTION GIVEN TO THE JOINT INTERVIEW WITH MR ATKINS, FROM WHICH BRIEF EXTRACTS WERE CARRIED. BUT ON FRIDAY, A B C'S GOOD MORNING, AMERICA (WHICH BEFORE SANDS' DEATH HAD CARRIED A HELPFUL INTEVIEW WITH GERRY FITT AND HAROLD MCCUSKER) BILLED REPEATEDLY ITS EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH MR. ATKINS, WHICH RAN FOR 9 MINUTES ON THE PROGRAMME.

CONFIDENTIAL

/5. ON THE

5. ON THE SAME MORNING, C B S'S MORNING NEWS (FOLLOWING SOME UNATTRIBUTABLE BRIEFING FROM B I S) RAN THE FIRST PUBLIC STORY ABOUT THE INVESTIGATION OF DALY'S REPORTING FROM BELFAST IN THE NEW YORK DAILY NEWS, AND ON SATURDAY EVENING THE MAIN CBS NEWS RAN THE STORY PROMINENTLY, INCLUDING AN INTERVIEW WITH ANDREW NEIL OF THE ECONOMIST.

6. NETWORK RADIO COVERAGE CONCENTRATED FOR THE MOST PART ON FACTUAL REPORTS FROM BELFAST, AND OVERALL COVERAGE WAS NOT UNFAVOURABLE, WITH SUBSTANTIAL USE BY ALL THE MAIN NETWORKS OF EXTRACTS FROM MR. ATKINS' INTERVIEW FOR B I S HEARD ACROSS THE STATES WITHIN 12 HOURS OF SANDS' DEATH.

7. COVERAGE BY LOCAL NEW YORK STATIONS OF EVENTS IN BELFAST AND OF THE REACTION IN NEW YORK, ILLUSTRATED VIVIDLY THE VAST GULF IN STANDARDS BETWEEN THESE STATIONS AND THE NATIONAL NETWORKS. LOCAL STATIONS INDULGED IN 1 MINUTE GLOSSY HISTORIES OF IRELAND (''BOBBY SANDS AND OTHERS OF THE I R A DIED FOR THE DREAM OF THIS MAP. BRITISH TROOPS AND PROTESTANTS IN THE NORTH HAVE DIED TO KEEP THE MAP THE WAY IT IS'' - W A B C), LACED THEIR REPORTS WITH BRIEF INTERVIEWS WITH IRISH-AMERICAN SYMPATHISERS WITH SANDS, AND NEVER FAILED TO CATCH THE BURNING OF EFFIGIES OUTSIDE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT OFFICES NEATLY TIMED FOR LOCAL NEWS CONSUMPTION. THE BRIEF USAGE OF MR. ATKINS' STATEMENT, READ TO CAMERA FOR 1 SMALL NETWORK AND 6 STATIONS BY B I S'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PROVIDED A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF STABILITY IN GENERALLY EMOTIVE REPORTS, FULL OF LANGUAGE LIKE ''THE DEATH OF SANDS WILL MAKE IRISH-AMERICANS MORE CONSCIOUS OF THEIR HERITAGE AND OF THE LOYALTY THAT THEY OWE TO THEIR BRETHREN, THE MEN AND WOMEN IN IRELAND WHO ARE RELATED TO THEM BY THE STRONGEST TIES OF BLOOD''. BY THE END OF THE WEEK SUCH LANGUAGE HAD BEEN WATERED DOWN, ALL THE LOCAL STATIONS CARRIED THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF DALY'S RESIGNATION FROM THE ''DAILY NEWS'', AND EVEN NEW YORK'S CONSISTANTLY HOSTILE CHANNEL 5 LED WITH AN INTERVIEW WITH THE VISITING BRITISH MINISTER FOR TRADE, MR. PARKINSON, ABOUT N. IRELAND.

HENDERSON.

NORTHERN IRELAND LIMITED

RID  
NAD  
INFORMATION DEPT  
WED  
MAED  
NEWS DEPT  
SECURITY DEPT  
PUSD  
PS  
PS/LPS  
PS/MR HURD

PS/MR RIDLEY  
PS/MR BLAKER  
PS/PUS  
SIR A ACLAND  
CHIEF CLERK  
MR ADAMS  
MR BULLARD  
MR FERGUSSON  
LORD N G LENNOX  
MR BRAITHEWAITE

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION  
NORTHERN IRELAND



GRS740

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

FM WASHINGTON 132300Z MAY 81  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELEGRAM NO 1471 OF 13 MAY  
INFO IMMEDIATE NIO LONDON NIO BELFAST  
PRIORITY DUBLIN BIS NEW YORK

MY TELEGRAM NO 1319

NORTHERN IRELAND : US MEDIA COVERAGE

1. THE HIGH AND GROWING VOLUME OF MEDIA COVERAGE (MY TELEGRAM UNDER REFERENCE) INTENSIFIED FURTHER FOLLOWING SANDS' DEATH ON 4 MAY. THROUGHOUT LAST WEEK NORTHERN IRELAND WAS THE LEADING SINGLE MEDIA STORY.

2. MY IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING TELEGRAM GIVES A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF TV AND RADIO COVERAGE, COMPILED IN NEW YORK WHERE THE MAJOR NETWORK HEADQUARTERS ARE SITED. TWO POINTS SHOULD BE EMPHASISED. FIRST, IT IS THE NATURE OF TV, AND PARTICULARLY US TV, TO FOCUS ON THE PICTORIAL, THE SENSATIONAL AND THE DRAMATIC RATHER THAN TO ANALYSE AND DISCUSS. MOREOVER, US TV HAS A MARKED TENDENCY TO IDENTIFY THE CURRENT LEAD STORY AND THEN GO FOR IT REGARDLESS. THE THREE US NETWORKS HAD THEIR TEAMS IN BELFAST AND WERE COMPETING FOR THE MOST STRIKING COVERAGE. PROCESSIONS, FUNERALS AND STREET VIOLENCE WERE WELCOME. SECOND, SUBJECT TO THOSE CONSIDERATIONS THE NATIONAL NETWORKS MADE SOME ATTEMPT AT BALANCE - THOUGH THAT BALANCE REFLECTED THE DEEP-ROOTED US PERCEPTION OF A TWO-SIDED STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE IRA AND THE BRITISH AUTHORITIES, WITH SCANT REFERENCE TO PROTESTANT OPINION OTHER THAN EXTREMIST.

3. PRINT COVERAGE HAS BEEN QUITE DIFFERENT. NEWS REPORTS FILED BY LONDON-BASED US CORRESPONDENTS HAVE BEEN EXTENSIVE AND GENERALLY FACTUAL. WILLIS (CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR) HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY HELPFUL IN E.G. HIS COVERAGE OF RADICAL LEFT-WING IRA OBJECTIVES, LINKS WITH OTHER TERRORIST GROUPS, AND FOREIGN TV CREWS PAYING CHILDREN TO STAGE STREET ATTACKS ON SECURITY FORCES. DOMESTIC NON-EDITORIAL COMMENT HAS BEEN VARIED. THERE HAS BEEN PROMINENT AND VIRULENT CRITICISM FROM IRA-SYMPATHISERS, ANSWERED TO SOME EXTENT BY ARTICLES AND LETTERS FROM CONSULS-GENERAL AND RESPONSIBLE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC. THE BALANCE OF THE CORRESPONDENCE COLUMNS HAS BEEN ADVERSE, ALTHOUGH THE STRIDENT TONE OF MANY OF THE IRA SUPPORTERS MAY NOT HAVE DONE THEIR CAUSE ANY GOOD. MORE SIGNIFICANTLY IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT THE MAJOR COLUMNISTS WHO HAVE ADDRESSED THE ISSUE (GEORGE WILL, WASHINGTON POST; ANTHONY LEWIS, NEW YORK TIMES; WILLIAM BUCKLEY, WASHINGTON STAR) HAVE BEEN STRONGLY SUPPORTIVE OF THE BRITISH POSITION. A NOTABLE AND PREDICTABLE EXCEPTION WAS MICHAEL

CONFIDENTIAL

/DALY, NEW

DALY, NEW YORK DAILY NEWS: BUT HIS PIECE ON THE ACTIONS OF A BRITISH ARMY PATROL HAS BEEN SO THOROUGHLY DEMOLISHED BY ANDREW NEIL IN THE DAILY MAIL AND ECONOMIST AS TO FORCE HIS RESIGNATION.

4. THE MOST LASTING AND SIGNIFICANT EXPRESSION OF US MAINSTREAM OPINION IS ALWAYS THE EDITORIALS. THE OUTCOME TO DATE HAS BEEN GENERALLY FAVOURABLE, CERTAINLY ON THE FUNDAMENTAL ISSUE OF POLITICAL STATUS. IT HAS BEEN GENERALLY RECOGNISED THAT THE PRISONERS OWN DEMANDS HAVE MADE THIS, RATHER THAN SPECIFIC PRISON REGULATIONS, THE CRUX. A SMALL MINORITY OF EDITORIALS HAVE DUCKED THE ISSUE, RESORTING TO GENERAL HAND-WRINGING OVER POINTLESS VIOLENCE, NEED FOR CONSTRUCTIVE ACTION ETC. BUT THE GREAT MAJORITY HAVE ADDRESSED THE PROBLEM, AND THE VERDICT HAS BEEN OVERWHELMINGLY FAVOURABLE TO HMG. IN MOST CASES THIS HAS BEEN TEMPERED BY THE NEAR-OBLIGATORY NEED TO SHOW QUOTE BALANCE UNQUOTE BY CRITICISING HMG ON SOME ASPECT OF POLICY TOWARDS N. IRELAND : HISTORIC MISDEEDS, DISCRIMINATION AGAINST CATHOLICS, BENIGN NEGLECT OF PROTESTANT BIGOTRY, NEED TO PRESS ACTIVELY FOR POWER-SHARING, NEED FOR FORCE-FEEDING OR FOR SOME QUOTE FLEXIBILITY UNQUOTE ON PRISON CONDITIONS, HAUGHTY INTRANSIGENCE (OF MANNER RATHER THAN SUBSTANCE). THERE IS CONSIDERABLE SUPPORT FOR CONTINUED LONDON-DUBLIN TALKS. SEVERAL WRITERS ARGUE THAT UNIFICATION, BY PEACEFUL CONSENT, IS THE ONLY FEASIBLE LONG-TERM SOLUTION. BUT, TO OUR KNOWLEDGE HERE, NO INFLUENTIAL US NEWSPAPER HAS CALLED EDITORIALY FOR THE GRANTING OF POLITICAL STATUS.

5. IN THE LAST FEW DAYS MEDIA ATTENTION, PRINT AND ELECTRONIC, HAS ECLINED SUBSTANTIALLY. SO FAR IT HAS NOT BEEN SIGNIFICANTLY REVIVED BY HUGHES' DEATH.

6. I AND MY STAFF - IN WASHINGTON, BIRMGHAM, NEW YORK AND CONSULS-GENERAL - HAVE GIVEN NUMEROUS RADIO AND TV INTERVIEWS. WE WILL CONTINUE TO TAKE WORTHWHILE OPPORTUNITIES ON INFLUENTIAL PROGRAMMES, THOUGH WE SHOULD AVOID GIVING LIFE TO THE STORY IF IT CONTINUES TO DECLINE. IT HAS BEEN HELPFUL TO HAVE THE IRISH PRESBYTERIAN GROUP HERE, AND THEY HAVE PERFORMED WELL; AND MR. PARKINSON GAVE A VERY EFFECTIVE TV INTERVIEW IN NEW YORK. WE WILL KEEP UNDER CONSTANT REVIEW THE DESIRABILITY OF VISITS BY MINISTERS OR MPS, AND WILL RECOMMEND ACCORDINGLY.

HENDERSON

NORTHERN IRELAND LIMITED

RID  
NAD  
INFORMATION DEPT  
WED  
MAED  
NEWS DEPT  
SECURITY DEPT  
PUSD  
PS  
PS/LPS  
PS/MR HURD

PS/MR RIDLEY  
PS/MR BLAKER  
PS/PUS  
SIR A ACLAND  
CHIEF CLERK  
MR ADAMS  
MR BULLARD  
MR FERGUSSON  
LORD N G LENNOX  
MR BRAITHEWAITE

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION  
NORTHERN IRELAND

CONFIDENTIAL

Ref. A04887

PRIME MINISTER

---

Cabinet: Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland Office received information on Tuesday that a Welsh Nationalist Member might, at the beginning of today's business in the House of Commons, move a writ for a further by-election in Fermanagh and South Tyrone. This did not happen, but there is a risk that a motion for the writ will be moved in the House fairly soon with the avowed intention of allowing the electors of the constituency a further opportunity to exercise their democratic rights and the real intention of embarrassing the Government. Discussions between the Ministers most directly concerned this morning revealed differences of opinion which you may think the Cabinet needs to resolve.

2. The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster has it in mind to raise the matter under Parliamentary Affairs. Discussion is, however, likely to widen to take in the general security situation in the Province, and you may therefore prefer to take the matter under a separate Northern Ireland Affairs item which could, as last week, follow Community Affairs since the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland wishes, I understand, to give the Cabinet a report on developments in Northern Ireland.

3. I attach a brief dealing solely with the problem of the writ.

REA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

13th May, 1981

CONFIDENTIAL

Ref. A04888

PRIME MINISTER

## WRIT FOR BY-ELECTION IN FERMANAGH AND SOUTH TYRONE

Background

1. The seat is vacant following the death of Mr Sands. While Parliament is sitting any Member can move that a writ be issued for a by-election. (For the position in a recess see paragraph 4 below.) Such a Motion is given immediate precedence and is debatable. The normal convention is that the writ is moved by the Chief Whip of the party of the Member who has died or vacated his seat. It is also the normal convention that there is an interval of six weeks or more between the death of a Member and the issue of the writ. When, however, the previous Member for this constituency (Mr Maguire) died, the writ was moved fairly quickly by an Ulster Unionist Member.
2. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland is most anxious that there should not be an early by-election in Fermanagh. This would increase the security problems of the Province and might lead to more aggressive tactics by the para-military Unionist organisations. More generally, the Cabinet were inclined to feel - though no formal decision was taken - that there should be early amending legislation to disqualify a convicted prisoner from being elected as an MP while serving his sentence. (Alternatively, as H Committee subsequently recommended, the legislation might prevent such a prisoner from being nominated.) Until such legislation is in place the IRA can repeat their propaganda coup by nominating another hunger striker as a candidate. These are all arguments for delaying the writ.
3. On the other hand, whatever amending legislation is first passed, a by-election will provide opportunities for republican propaganda. Moreover, a deliberate decision by the Government or the House of Commons to leave the seat vacant for a lengthy period would itself give considerable propaganda opportunities to those opposed to the Government's policy. It is by no means certain that the Labour Party, or large sections of it, would not join such opposition. The bi-partisan approach to Northern Ireland is already under threat and the Cabinet will need to balance the need to sustain it, as far as possible, against the anxieties of the Northern Ireland Secretary on the security problems.
4. Discussion at tomorrow's Cabinet can be confined to the period until the summer recess. The law provides that during that recess (or any recess lasting at least two weeks) any two Members can approach the Speaker seeking a writ because a Member has died, and their application must be granted. There is therefore no way of delaying the by-election beyond August or September.

- The options available if a writ is moved in the near future are broadly:
  - (a) to defeat the Motion, which would mean the matter could not be raised again in that form in the present session;
  - (b) to invite the House to adjourn the discussion with or without naming a day at which discussion should be resumed;
  - (c) to accept the Motion.

### Handling

6. You will want the Chancellor of the Duchy to introduce the subject. You will then want the views of the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and the Home Secretary. The latter can report on the progress made with the preparation of a bill to disqualify prisoners serving sentences from nomination or election. The Chief Whip can assess the balance of Parliamentary opinion and the chances of securing general support for such a bill. (If the bill were to be opposed by a substantial body of Members not only would it take longer to get through but it would disrupt the rest of the legislative programme, which is already at risk because of the prospect of a bill on the Canadian Constitution.)

7. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary may have views on the repercussions in both the Republic of Ireland and the United States of a decision to obstruct at Westminster the holding of a further by-election in Northern Ireland. The Lord Chancellor and the Secretary of State for Scotland are among other members of the Cabinet who may wish to contribute to the discussion.

### Conclusion

8. The Cabinet may feel that, although it would be wrong to defeat the Motion for the issue of a writ by a straight vote, thus preventing the matter being raised again before the recess, it would nevertheless be right to secure that no writ is issued until the Government have decided and announced the provisions of fresh legislation governing the eligibility for Parliamentary elections.

9. If so, you might be able to guide the Cabinet to agree that the Chancellor of the Duchy should be ready to move a manuscript amendment that any Motion for a new writ should be adjourned for at least a month, and that in the meantime the Home Secretary should proceed urgently with the preparation of legislation and the Chancellor of the Duchy should have further consultations with other parties in the House in the hope of securing their agreement to it. The Cabinet would then need to return to the matter when precise proposals about the legislation were available.

RTA

13 May 1981

C. MR INGRAM  
MR ALEXANDER

JOHN HUME (SDLP) - INTERVIEW ON IRA HUNGER STRIKERS

Transcript from BBC Radio 4, Today, 13 May 1981

PROGRAMME PRESENTER: ..... he agrees there's no case for giving political status to the hunger strikers, but nonetheless he thinks the British Government is being too inflexible. He told Hugh Sykes what he plans to say to Mrs Thatcher and Mr Foot:

HUME: I have proposals to put to them that I believe can resolve this problem without any sacrifice of principles. And I believe that the cost of the action that I am proposing will be far far less than the cost of inaction, and I think the cost of the inaction has already been too high.

INTERVIEWER : Where do you think the British Government could be more flexible now and actually satisfy the IRA hunger strikers?

HUME: Well I think for a starter the question of clothing for example at the moment women prisoners in Northern Ireland wear their own clothing. So there's clearly no sacrifice of principle in giving their own clothing to all prisoners in Northern Ireland. And secondly: I think that there is room for movement in the question of association in the wings of the prison to all prisoners.

INTERVIEWER : But on the other hand any kind of giving way towards anything that might look like special treatment might appear to be granting the old form of special status mightn't it?

HUME: Well you know I think that if we're having debates now about words in this whole situation the realities are that this is a deep political problem which is escalating. And when political problems escalate it requires political action by Governments. I have mentioned

two proposals there to you in addition to the package the Government put on offer at Christmas. And I have every reason to believe that that would bring the whole matter to an end.

INTERVIEWER : The hunger strikers are the immediate problem of course, but the more long term problem is what to do with Northern Ireland. You're now proposing a referendum in the north and in the republic aren't you?

HUME : Well I'm proposing that at the ~~xxx~~ end of a package, a developed package, which would protect every section of the Irish community and give positive roles to them. , and that having been set out to them seek its endorsement from the people of the north and of the south in separate referendums.

INTERVIEWER : You mentioned a referendum in the north and in the republic ...

HUME : Yes.

INTERVIEWER : ... if the referendum in the north was no to any kind of package that you helped to work out would you accept that verdict regardless of what the republic vote was?

HUME : Well I would think that that would be a serious setback for a settlement because because I think any settlement must have the consensus of all sections of the population ....

INTERVIEWER : Of the north?

HUME : ... yes no doubt about that. But I would believe that if this process is properly approached that we wouldn't have such an outcome, that people would say that this was the way forward.

INTERVIEWER : What, even though there is a two thirds majority against a third of protestants against catholics in the north?

HUME : Yes but I mean I think that everybody in the north of Ireland has got to realise the traditional approaches to a solution to our problem and the shouting of old slogans is precisely what has led us

the mess we're in today, and that there has to be a re-examination of traditional approaches.



CONFIDENTIAL

256



WLO  
NID

Ireland

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

13 May 1981

Call by the Irish Ambassador

As you know, the Irish Ambassador called on the Prime Minister this evening. I attach a copy of the record of their discussion.

I am sending copies of this letter and its enclosure to Roy Harrington (Northern Ireland Office) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

M. O'D. B. ALEXANDER

Roderic Lyne, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONFIDENTIAL #

SUBJECT

CONFIDENTIAL

cc Master

RECORD OF A CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE IRISH AMBASSADOR, DR. EAMON KENNEDY, AT 10 DOWNING STREET ON 13 MAY AT 1805 HOURS

---

Present:-

Prime Minister

H.E. Dr. Eamon Kennedy

Secretary of State for Northern  
Ireland

Mr. M.O'D.B. Alexander

After thanking the Prime Minister for seeing him at such short notice, Dr. Kennedy said that the Taoiseach had asked him to stress at the outset the importance he gave to the efforts being made by both Governments to secure reconciliation in Northern Ireland. Both the Prime Ministers had been subjected to a great deal of pressure designed to destroy the developing relationship between Dublin and London. Both had resisted. But there was now a real danger that they might be blown off course by the growing tension in Northern Ireland and by its repercussions elsewhere.

There would soon be an election in the Republic. It was conceivable that IRA candidates might, for the first time, stand. They might win considerable support. Against that background, the Taoiseach considered the time was ripe for a political initiative. Two hunger strikers had died. There would now be a pause before any more "candidates for martyrdom" lost their lives. This pause should be exploited. It would, of course, be risky to make a move. It would be equally risky not to move.

The Irish Government recognised that political status for the hunger strikers was "not on". But within the five demands, would it not be possible to move on clothes and on association outside work periods? It might also be useful to consider making use of the European Commission of Human Rights or its Secretary-General; to consider appointing an outsider to review the situation; or to pursue the suggestion which Mr. Stephen Ross, MP, had

CONFIDENTIAL

/just put

CONFIDENTIAL

- 2 -

just put forward. The Irish Government had reason to believe that if movement could be secured on the two issues which Dr. Kennedy had mentioned, the strike would collapse. There could be no certainty about it but that was their assessment. The collapse of the strike would, of course, have <sup>an</sup> enormous impact on Anglo/Irish relations. The Taoiseach would want to come to London to signal the opening of a new chapter in the bilateral relationship.

Dr. Kennedy said, finally, that he had been anxious to see the Prime Minister before Mr. Hume called in order to stress the importance the Irish Government attached to securing some sort of movement in the present impasse.

The Prime Minister recalled that the last thing Bobby Sands had said before lapsing into a coma was that he wanted all five demands. Nothing less would do. Hughes had taken the same position. So had his brother on television the previous evening. The fact was that the hunger strikers wanted political status. The Prime Minister also recalled her meeting with Dr. Kennedy before the first hunger strike had begun in the autumn of last year. She had told him then of the Government's decision to allow the issue of civilian clothes to conforming prisoners. The NIO had later published an account of the situation in The Maze which had made it clear that this was one of the most humane and up-to-date prisons in the world. Everybody knew this. The rules, of course, were those appropriate to the running of a prison. They did not give the inmates prisoner of war status. There could be no question of HMG submitting to salami tactics leading to political status. Hughes had been a murderer not a prisoner of war. Freedom of association was not possible. Anything that was made available to prisoners in The Maze would have to be made available throughout prisons in Northern Ireland. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland called attention to a recent article in An Phoblacht which had stressed that nothing less than the five demands would end the hunger strike. Dr. Kennedy had said that the Irish Government had reason to believe that meeting two demands would end the hunger strike. The hunger strikers themselves denied this.

CONFIDENTIAL /Dr. Kennedy

CONFIDENTIAL

- 3 -

Dr. Kennedy said that if the Secretary of State was right about the reality, there was no hope of breaking the deadlock. But the relatives of the hunger strikers had led the authorities in Dublin to think that it might be possible to sway the hunger strikers. He repeated that there could be no certainty. But he hoped that if there was some give in the British Government's position, a way out might be found. The Prime Minister said that the European Commission of Human Rights were "welcome to come in". We had nothing to hide. But we could not invite the Commission in. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland said that someone had to make a complaint. The Commission could not accept an invitation from HMG. Dr. Kennedy recalled that the Commission had said in its 1978 Report that in one or two respects the regime was inflexible. The Secretary of State said that it was for this very reason that nine different changes in the regime had been introduced last year. Dr. Kennedy stressed that he had only mentioned the point because of the need to find a mechanism to reintroduce the Commission into the situation.

The Secretary of State recalled that Bobby Sands had refused to endorse the complaints made by his sister. If any of the other hunger strikers or their relatives complained, HMG would give the Commission every facility. The Prime Minister commented that if Dr. Kennedy's account of the prisoners' frame of mind was correct, they ought themselves to be willing to complain. Dr. Kennedy acknowledged the point adding that his authorities were trying to "get the hunger strikers into that frame of mind". They continued to believe that the Commission of Human Rights or its parent body, the Council of Europe, had a role. The Irish Foreign Minister, Mr. Lenihan, was at present in Strasbourg discussing the situation. Some way must be found to end the present tragic chapter.

Reverting to the frame of mind of the hunger strikers, Dr. Kennedy said that the fact that there were hundreds of prisoners who still enjoyed special category status was bound to affect the outlook of those prisoners who did not have special category status. The case of Bobby Sands was particularly relevant: he was a prisoner who had had special category status during a

CONFIDENTIAL

/previous

CONFIDENTIAL

- 4 -

previous period in prison. The Prime Minister asked whether there was any possibility of moving the existing special category prisoners. The Secretary of State said there was at present insufficient space to permit this though something might be done later in the year. A good deal would depend on whether or not the dirty protest was renewed. Dr. Kennedy said he did not wish to lay too much stress on the issue of the existing special category prisoners. This was just another ingredient in the situation.

Dr. Kennedy said that support for the IRA in the South and in the North was growing. In the North they now appeared as the natural leaders of the Catholic community, a role previously held by the SDLP. Polarisation was increasing. The men in the middle were being left without a role.

The Prime Minister repeated that if a role could be found for the Commission of Human Rights, acting within its terms of reference, no obstacle would be met from HMG. On the broader situation, she asked Dr. Kennedy to convey to the Taoiseach her appreciation of his attitude in recent days. Like him she had tried to keep alive the search for peace and reconciliation. She had stressed this in what she had said in the House of Commons the previous Thursday and in her speech to the Scottish Party Conference in Perth on Friday. She did not want to give up the progress which had been made. Dr. Kennedy said that the Taoiseach was well aware of what the Prime Minister had done. He also did not wish to be blown off course.

It was agreed that the Ambassador would keep in close touch about developments in the days ahead.

The meeting ended at 1830 hours.

*Handwritten signature*

13 May 1981

CONFIDENTIAL

NORTHERN IRELAND: ADVANCE COPIES

18 (7)

PS	N IRELAND OFFICE - PS TO SEC OF STATE
PS/LPS	RM 66 A/2 GGS
PS/PUS	N IRELAND OFFICE [4 copies]
MR BULLARD	
MR FERGUSSON	SIR K STOWE
HD/RID	MR MORIATY
HD/PUSD (2)	MR MARSHALL
HD/TPD <i>INT D</i>	MR BUXTON
HD/NEWS DEPT	CABINET OFFICE - SIR R ARMSTRONG
.....	DIO

NO 10 DOWNING STREET

~~RESIDENT CLERK~~

*PA has seen  
for  
And*

IMMEDIATE

GRPS 480

CONFIDENTIAL

FM DUBLIN 13:1245Z MAY 1981

TO IMMEDIATE DESKBY 13:1200Z FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 153 OF 13 MAY 1981

AND TO IMMEDIATE DESKBY 13:1200Z NIO (B)

REPEATED FOR INFO TO PRIORITY WASHINGTON

FCO PLEASE PASS SAVING TO OTHER EC POSTS

ADVANCE COPY

HUNGER STRIKE: PUBLIC OPINION IN THE REPUBLIC.

1. IN VIEW OF MR JOHN HUME'S MEETING LATER TODAY WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, I AM SENDING THESE IMPRESSIONS OF THE MOOD IN DUBLIN AFTER HUGHES' DEATH. I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO THINK THAT PUBLIC OPINION IN THE REPUBLIC WILL REMAIN UNMOVED BY FURTHER DEATHS.

2. AS PREDICTED IN MY TELNO 132, SANDS' DEATH DID NOT AROUSE DEEP EMOTION HERE IN DUBLIN - MOST OF THE DAMAGE WAS DONE BY HOOLIGANS AND THE RELATIVE SMALL COMMEMORATION MARCH TOOK SOME DAYS TO ORGANISE. BUT A SIMILAR SIZED DEMONSTRATION TURNED UP OUTSIDE THE EMBASSY LAST NIGHT WITHIN THREE HOURS OF THE NEWS OF HUGHES' DEATH REACHING DUBLIN. FOR THE FIRST TIME THE DEMONSTRATORS TURNED VIOLENT AND THE GARDA WERE FORCED TO BATON-CHARGE THEM. (SEE MY SECOND LET FOR FULL DETAILS.)

VIOLENT AND THE GARDA WERE FORCED TO BATON-CHARGE THEM. (SEE MY SECOND IFT FOR FULL DETAILS.)

3. WHILE IT IS TRUE TO SAY THAT PUBLIC OPINION IS NOT YET STRONGLY AROUSED THERE IS INCREASINGLY A MOOD THAT TWO DEATHS ARE ENOUGH. MR LENIHAN TOLD ME ON MONDAY THAT HE THOUGHT THAT THE IRISH GOVERNMENT COULD COPE WITH HUGHES' DEATH BUT THAT SOMETHING THEN HAD TO BE DONE TO PREVENT ANY FURTHER DEATHS.

THE IRISH SEE OUR CURRENT POLICY AS AN UNWILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER ANY COURSE OF ACTION OTHER THAN THE ONE WE CALCULATE TO GET COMPLETE SURRENDER BY THE STRIKERS. THEY SEE THIS AS JUST ONE MORE OCCASION WHEN BRITISH POLITICAL SENSE AND ACUMEN ARE SWITCHED OFF WHEN FACED WITH IRISH PROBLEMS. IN THIS THERE IS OF COURSE THE FEELING THAT OUR AREA OF POLITICAL MANOEUVRE IS MUCH TOO RESTRICTED BY CONSIDERATION OF WHAT THE PROTESTANTS MIGHT DO. ALMOST ALL SECTIONS OF OPINION ARE LONGING FOR SOME INITIATIVE BY US QUICKLY TO AVERT ANY MORE DEATHS. FOR US TO MAKE NO MOVE WILL, I FEAR, LEAD TO WIDESPREAD CRITICISM. THERE WILL BE A CORRESPONDING STRAIN ON ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONS, AND WE NATURALLY CANNOT BE SURE THAT THE TAOISEACH WOULD STILL BE ABLE TO HOLD A MODERATE LINE.

4. IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES MR HAUGHEY HAS SO FAR DONE US VERY WELL. HIS PUBLIC UTTERANCES (INCLUDING HIS STATEMENT LAST NIGHT - SEE MY THIRD IFT) HAVE BEEN RESTRAINED, BUT THE PRESENT SITUATION IS CAUSING MORE AND MORE DIFFICULTY. THERE ARE NOW LOUD MURMURINGS WITHIN HIS OWN PARTY AGAINST THE LINE WHICH HE IS TAKING. THIS IS REFLECTED IN THE WARNINGS WHICH EVEN OUR MOST WELL-DISPOSED CONTACTS HERE ARE NOW GIVING US. THEY ALSO SAY THAT PIRA WILL RECEIVE MORE SYMPATHY WITH EACH NEW DEATH.

5. THE HUNGER STRIKE HAS ALSO THROWN MR HAUGHEY'S ELECTORAL PLANS INTO DISARRAY. THE LONGER HE LEAVES AN ELECTION, THE WORSE THE ECONOMIC POSITION GETS (ONLY YESTERDAY THE BANKS ANNOUNCED A 1% INCREASE ON LENDING RATES). THE EXPECTATION YESTERDAY WAS THAT THE ELECTION WOULD BE CALLED IMMEDIATELY AFTER A FIANNA FAIL PARLIAMENTARY PARTY MEETING ALREADY ARRANGED FOR THE MORNING OF THURSDAY 14 MAY. BUT IT IS NOW SUGGESTED THAT HUGHES' DEATH MAY CAUSE A FURTHER POSTPONEMENT. IT IS NOW TOO LATE TO CALL AN ELECTION ON 4 JUNE SO THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE REALISTIC DATES FOR AN ELECTION ARE 10 AND 11 JUNE.

FIGG

CONFIDENTIAL



file

cc: NIO  
CO

BE

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

12 May 1981

CS

The Hunger Strike

The Prime Minister has seen a copy of Delhi telegram No. 461 of 7 May about the death of Bobby Sands. The final lines of this telegram read:-

"..it would be helpful to have further guidance. In particular it would be helpful to know the precise charges on which Sands was convicted and the form of trial he underwent".

The Prime Minister had been under the impression that all our missions overseas were being kept fully in the picture about the developing situation in Northern Ireland. She finds it surprising that so important a mission as Delhi should lack background of the kind referred to above. I should be grateful for an assurance that all our missions are being provided with up to date guidance.

I am sending copies of this letter to Roy Harrington (Northern Ireland Office) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

M. O'D. B. ALEXANDER

Roderic Lyne, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

CONFIDENTIAL



GRS 280  
RESTRICTED  
FROM DELHI 071003Z MAY  
TO PRIORITY FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 461 OF 7 MAY 1981  
INFO CALCUTTA

RESTRICTED

*Michael - it does NOT appear that*

PS TO THE PM.

NO 10 DOWNING STREET

*Our Thomson has been kept properly informed*

CLEGHORN'S LETTER OF 6 MAY: SANDS

1. THE EXTENSIVE AND CRITICAL INDIAN PRESS COVERAGE OF SAND'S DEATH YESTERDAY, WAS PARALLELED, ACCORDING TO TODAY'S PRESS, BY AN ALTERCATION IN THE UPPER HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT BETWEEN MEMBERS OF THE RULING PARTY AND OPPOSITION MPS, WHO INSISTED ON STANDING FOR A MINUTE'S SILENCE IN "HONOUR" OF SANDS. IT APPEARS THAT THE OPPOSITION, LET BY THE LEFT WING PARTIES, ATTEMPTED TO USE THE ISSUE TO EMBARRASS THE GOVERNMENT. BOTH THE VICE-PRESIDENT FROM THE CHAIR AND THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE, THE COMMERCE MINISTER, MR PRANAB MUKHERJEE, RESISITED OPPOSITION DEMANDS THAT THE HOUSE SHOULD STAND IN SILENCE THOUGH BOTH ARE REPORTED TO HAVE SAID THAT THEY "FULLY SHARED" THE SENTIMENTS OF THE OPPOSITION. MUKHERJEE APPEALED TO THE OPPOSITION NOT TO ESTABLISH A PRECEDENT WHICH WOULD "CREATE COMPLICATIONS LATER". DESPITE THEIR OBJECTIONS, AND THOSE OF A NUMBER OF CONGRESS (I) MPS, THE OPPOSITION MEMBERS WENT AHEAD WITH THIS GESTURE.

2. THERE HAVE BEEN RUMOURS THAT DEMONSTRATIONS ARE PLANNED OUTSIDE THE MISSION HERE BUT SO FAR NOTHING HAS MATERIALISED. THERE WAS HOWEVER A SMALL HOSTILE DEMONSTRATION BY THE WEST BENGAL YOUTH FRONT OUTSIDE THE OFFICE IN CALCUTTA YESTERDAY IN WHICH A NUMBER OF THREATS WERE MADE BUT NO DAMAGE WAS DONE.

← 3. WE HAVE ISSUED A PRESS RELEASE QUOTING STATEMENTS BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND AND THE ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH, BUT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO HAVE FURTHER GUIDANCE. IN PARTICULAR, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO KNOW THE PRECISE CHARGES ON WHICH SANDS WAS CONVICTED, AND THE FORM OF TRIAL HE UNDERWENT.

THOMSON

NORTHERN IRELAND LIMITED

RID  
NAD  
INFORMATION DEPT  
WED SAD  
MAED  
NEWS DEPT  
SECURITY DEPT  
PUSD  
PS  
PS/LPS  
PS/MR HURD

PS/MR RIDLEY  
PS/MR BLAKER  
PS/PUS  
SIR A ACLAND  
CHIEF CLERK  
MR ADAMS  
MR BULLARD  
MR FERGUSSON  
LORD N G LENNOX  
MR BRAITHWAITE

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION  
NORTHERN IRELAND

[NOT ADVANCED]

RESTRICTED

Group/Class ..... REM 19  
Piece ..... 504

Minute from Armstrong to  
Alexander dated 12 May 1981

Paper extracted and  
temporarily retained  
under Section 3(4)  
pending completion of  
review.  
(date) ..... 13 October 2011  
(Signed) ..... C. Mayland

put back in place  
5 MARCH 2012  
AS

SECRET AND PERSONAL

MR. ALEXANDER

Prime Minister, 2

Paras 5 & 6 are obviously right. I have incidentally suggested to the NCO that they should make a film on the activities of PIRA similar to that which was made about Afghanistan. I have a feeling that we are not waging the propaganda war hard enough.

We have certain indications, \*

the line that Mr. John Hume is likely to take when he comes to see the Prime Minister tomorrow.

2. He may well ask her whether Her Majesty's Government would be prepared to concede:-

- (a) the right of prisoners in the Maze to wear their own clothes at all times:
- (b) their right to enjoy "free association" at all times.

It seems to be in his mind that a concession on these two points could be put alongside selective quotations from the statement made on 18th December last to constitute a package which he could present as offering a substantial degree of compliance with the PIRA's five demands.

3. The right of free association at all times is of course the key demand; and it is out of the question. It would mean that the authorities had lost control of the regime.

4. I suppose that you could conceivably say that we should always be prepared to consider whether there could be any marginal extensions, for all conforming prisoners, on the wearing of own clothes and on free association. But I doubt whether you should do so, at any rate now, and for two reasons:

- (a) \* ~ \* suggest that Mr. Hume is not a channel through which the PIRA are interested in speaking/operating.
- (b) \* ~ \* confirm (what I have also heard from Mr. Nally in Dublin) that the PIRA are not at present interested in any compromise whatever. They believe that they are on to a winner, that Her Majesty's Government will be put under increasing pressure, and that eventually, if they continue as they are now going with a succession of deaths of hunger-strikers, Her Majesty's Government will be forced to give in. They are not at present interested in anything but full and explicit written satisfaction on all the five demands.

\* ~ \* Passages deleted and retained under Section 3(4).

Wayland  
6 January 2012

SECRET AND PERSONAL

5. The concessions which we think Mr. Hume may seek would not therefore stop the hunger-strike. Nor would they help in the propaganda battle: they would simply be seen as a sign of weakening resolution in London, and would encourage the PIRA to continue. What is more, we have reason to believe that Mr. Hume knows that they would not bring about the end of the hunger-strike or the protest. If he asks for them, therefore, he will be doing so for the sake of the political use he can make of them.

6. If all this is right, this is no time to be talking or thinking about compromise. We have to stick to the present line; we have to show that our will is as strong as that of the PIRA; we have to try to undermine that belief that they can win the propaganda battle (this must mean stepping up our own counter-propaganda); and we have to continue to contain PIRA violence in the North. Only on this course have we some hope of preventing the Protestant backlash which is what the PIRA would like to provoke.

REA

Robert Armstrong

12th May 1981

CONFIDENTIAL

BK



file

cc: CO  
FCO  
PM

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

12 May 1981

CS

Telephone Conversation with Mr. Nally

Dermot Nally rang me earlier today from Dublin. He said that the Taoiseach had asked him to convey to London his genuine and deep concern about the situation in Northern Ireland.

According to Mr. Nally, Mr. Haughey believes that the Catholic population in the North is now completely under the control of the IRA. Mr. Haughey feared that the population in those areas of the Republic close to the Border was also being increasingly influenced by the IRA. There was now a possibility that in an Election, as many as six seats in the Border areas might be won by IRA sympathisers. If this were to happen, it was not inconceivable that IRA-inclined members of the Dail would hold the balance of power after the Election. This would obviously be a thoroughly undesirable situation.

Mr. Nally said that the Taoiseach had tried to get the hunger strikers to associate themselves with an appeal to the European Commission on Human Rights. The hunger strikers had refused since, according to Mr. Nally, they knew they were on a winner. The Taoiseach was therefore wondering whether it would be possible for HMG to take steps to involve the Commission. Could we, for instance, take as our starting point the document issued by the Northern Ireland Office on 18 December and invite the Commission to investigate the claim that undertakings given in that document had not been carried out.

I made plain to Mr. Nally that I was sceptical about the merits of his suggestion, both from the point of view of its acceptability to HMG and from the point of view of its impact on the hunger strikers. Nonetheless I undertook to convey the Taoiseach's message to you and to the Prime Minister.

/ Mr. Nally

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 2 -

Mr. Nally expressed his gratitude. He went on to say that if we here thought it would be helpful, the Taoiseach would be very ready to meet with the Prime Minister to discuss the situation. Failing that Mr. Nally himself was ready at any moment to come to London to talk matters over. I took note of the offer.

I am sending copies of this letter to Roderic Lyne (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

M. O'D. B. ALEXANDER

Roy Harrington, Esq.,  
Northern Ireland Office

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

(2)



*Prime Minister*  
The draft reply to the 'Four  
Horsemen' is still under consideration.

*MW*

*Ant*

PRIME MINISTER

I reported to Cabinet on 7 May about the situation in Northern Ireland following Sands' death two days before. You may like to have an account of what has happened since and how we see things developing in the next few days.

2. Sands' funeral on the afternoon of 7 May was the major spectacle that we had expected. However the numbers turning out (30,000 by the police account) were fewer than PIRA would have hoped, and the proceedings were relatively peaceful. Even so, there was extensive intimidation practised on firms, shops, schools and so forth; many who duly stayed away from work did not come out on parade, or only briefly. Also, the more offensive aspects of the funeral itself were to some extent counteracted by the service in which Father Mullan prayed for Constable Ellis as well as Sands, and by the service of commemoration for all those killed in the troubles which Dr Paisley conducted with skilful moderation at Belfast City Hall. The resulting media coverage at the end of the day was generally more balanced than we expected and not unhelpful.

3. The renewal of disturbances expected after the funeral has been effectively contained by the efforts of the security forces. There are indications that PIRA themselves see advantage in continuing the current campaign at a less violent level on the streets, though certainly not at the expense of continued terrorist attacks on the security forces. There has been a rise in the incidence of such shootings, mostly opportunist; there have also been two mortar attacks, accurate but fortunately causing only one serious injury, on border police stations at Newtownhamilton and Rosslea (though the attacks were mounted from vehicles close to the police stations, well to the North of the border). In all this, and in the continuing nightly rioting, we have been very fortunate to see so few security force and civilian casualties.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL



4. Inter-sectarian tension has eased, though the Catholics remain apprehensive and the Loyalists suspicious. Both sides need continued reassurance. That has been our local message through the media. To the world at large, as you know, apart from giving some balance to the picture of violent activity that appears on the television screen, I have been at pains to get across that the situation has not arisen (as some suggest) because the Government has refused to make some minor change in the prison regime, but because the protesters have always stuck out (and are still sticking out) for the granting of "political status" i.e. an acknowledgement that their murders and other appalling crimes can be politically justified and therefore that they should be allowed to take over control of their parts of the prison. I propose that we should take advantage of the message from the Four Horsemen (Senator Kennedy et al) to spell out this position, plus evidence of our flexibility on the prison regime generally, to the audience in the United States.

5. The next immediate hurdle, however, will be the death of Francis Hughes, which may well be very soon; he may not last more than 24-48 hours, confronting us with another PIRA orchestrated funeral in rural South Londonderry, perhaps over next weekend. I am assessing the prospects for this now and will report further to the Cabinet on Thursday.

6. I am sending copies of this letter to Cabinet colleagues and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Hinde Pennell*

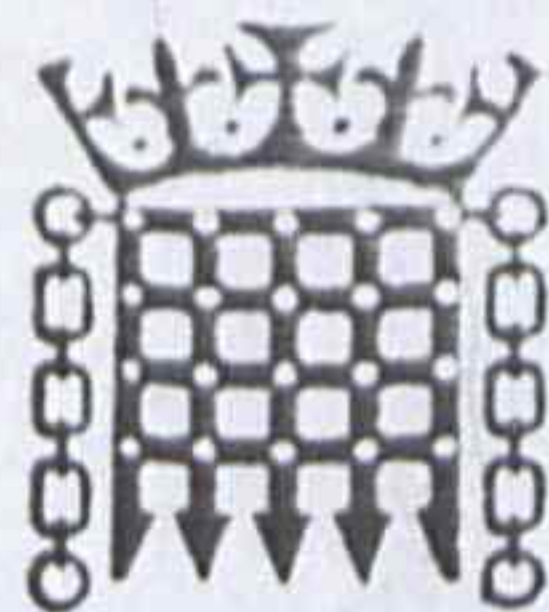
P.P. HUMPHREY ATKINS  
(Signed on behalf of  
Secretary of State  
in his absence)

12 May 1981

CONFIDENTIAL



From Stephen Ross MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

11th May 1981 .

*Don Ticheel*

Hunger Strike at the Maze

I of course totally support the Government's firm stand on the issue of political status for the I.R.A. prisoners, but it is obvious that despite all our efforts, too much of the western world still believes we can make further concessions to improve matters.

There is also the rather disturbing story in New Society written by a correspondent who claims to have visited an I.R.A. prisoner with his mother and which certainly does paint a very grim picture.

To make plain that we are all concerned to see if there is any way in which the present regime can be improved without conceding the impossible, I would like to suggest that a small group of MPs from the All Party Committee under your Chairmanship, invite senior representatives of the main political parties in Ulster to visit the Maze as soon as possible and to interview the hunger strikers, administrators, prison wardens and chaplains, to see if there is any way of healing the present impasse.

If the invitation could be used to persuade those on hunger strike to call off their campaign pending the outcome of our subsequent report, that at least would be worthwhile.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Prime Minister and Humphrey Atkins.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Stephen Ross".

Michael Mates, Esq., MP  
House of Commons.

Telephone  
BELFAST 650222

J. C. HERMON, O.B.E.  
Chief Constable



BROOKLYN  
KNOCK ROAD  
BELFAST  
NORTHERN IRELAND BT5 6LE

8th May 1981

(2)

*ml*

Dear Secretary of State,

Thank you for your very generous letter congratulating the Force on its operational performance over the past very sensitive period. May I ask that you thank the Prime Minister for her remarks and assure her that the RUC will do its very best towards maintaining and restoring peace and reconciliation throughout Northern Ireland.

On receipt of your letter I had its content conveyed to the Force and attach a copy of the message sent. I know that every member will fully appreciate your remarks and have no doubt that it will further enhance the already very high state of morale.

Yours sincerely,

*J. C. Hermon*

Chief Constable

The Rt Hon Humphrey Atkins  
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland  
Northern Ireland Office  
Stormont Castle  
BELFAST  
BT4 3ST

*Send a copy to the  
Prime Minister please  
11.5.*

*Sojs  
Tasee  
Jm  
11/5*

*Prime Minister  
ofc  
Vind*

*PS of S (BoL)  
PS/POS (BoL)  
Mr Belloch  
Mr Marshall  
Mr. Burns  
Mr. Wyatt  
Mr. Ranson  
Mr. Alexander*

RR XSF

MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY OF STATE

THE CHIEF CONSTABLE HAS RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND HE PASSES IT ON WITH HIS OWN CONGRATULATIONS FOLLOWING THE SUCCESSFUL POLICE ACTION OF RECENT DAYS.

TEXT OF MESSAGE

YOU AND YOUR COLLEAGUES IN THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY ARE GREATLY TO BE CONGRATULATED ON THE TACT, SENSITIVITY AND COURAGE WITH WHICH YOU HAVE HANDLED THE LAST FEW DIFFICULT DAYS. THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT FURTHER TESTS ARE TO COME. I THOUGHT YOU WOULD LIKE TO KNOW, THEREFORE, THAT I REPORTED TO THE CABINET THIS MORNING AND EXPRESSED MY ADMIRATION FOR THE WAY THE RUC AND THE ARMY ARE CARRYING OUT THEIR DUTIES. THE PRIME MINISTER PARTICULARLY ASKED ME TO PASS ON TO YOU AND TO THE GOC HER OWN ENDORSEMENT OF THIS VIEW. I AM VERY HAPPY TO DO SO.

THE CHIEF CONSTABLE REMINDS THE FORCE THAT THERE WILL BE DIFFICULT DAYS AHEAD AND ASKS FOR CONTINUING VIGILANCE AND HIGH STANDARDS OF POLICING WITH PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO PERSONAL SAFETY OF MEMBERS.

AO: CHIEF CONSTABLE

RR S20016 07/05/81 2316

ANCUE

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,  
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

Michael Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON  
SW1

8 May 1981

*RA*  
*Paul*

*Dear Michael,*

... I attach yesterday's copy of the "Newsletter", one of Northern Ireland's leading dailies. You may be interested to see the advertisement on Page 5 which is one of a number we have had published recently in different newspapers, and the same theme has been used in TV advertisements.

The appeal to parents has been complemented by personal requests for support which my Secretary of State has made to community leaders (like Bishop Philbin), and of course by public statements (such as yesterday's).

From the speech made by the priest at Sands's funeral service and from the quieter time which Belfast had last night, it would seem the message may be getting through.

*Yours sincerely*  
*Muir E. Phelan*

M W HOPKINS

**The worry is yours,  
the sentence is theirs!**



**Save tears...**

**Save time...**



**CHECK ON  
YOUR CHILDREN**

ISSUED BY THE NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE.



889113 PO SW G

OSEAGRAM LN LFTC

LFT012 CLF308 LBH986 ELB3824 TCB565 EIE072 ICC331 QIA547 1-022265C126

GBXX CY UIAX 260

USGOVT NFWASHINGTON DC 260/249 06 420P EDT

ETAT

PRIME MINISTER MARGARET THATCHER 10 DOWNING ST  
LONDON SW1



DEAR PRIME MINISTER THATCHER

WE WANT YOU TO KNOW PERSONALLY OF OUR DEEP CONCERN OVER THE  
SPECTRE OF WORSENING VIOLENCE AND TRAGEDY THAT THREATEN

TO ENGULF NORTHERN IRELAND AFTER THE DEATH OF BOBBY SANDS.

IN RECENT MONTHS WE HAVE PRAISED YOUR HOPEFUL INITIATIVE  
WITH PRIME MINISTER HAUGHEY OF IRELAND AND WE HAVE LOOKED  
FORWARD TO FURTHER PROGRESS IN SECURING A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF

THE CONFLICT THROUGHOUT THESE TRAGIC YEARS OF KILLING AND  
DESTRUCTION IN NORTHERN IRELAND WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY AND UNEQUIVOCAL

LY CONDEMNED ALL VIOLENCE FROM ANY SOURCE  
BUT WE QUESTION A POSTURE OF INFLEXIBILITY THAT MUST LEAD

INEVITABLY TO MORE SENSELESS VIOLENCE AND MORE NEEDLESS  
DEATHS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

WE URGE YOU TO ACT NOW BEFORE ADDITIONAL LIVES ARE LOST TO  
IMPLEMENT SENSIBLE AND REASONABLE REFORMS IN THE ADMINISTRATION

OF THE MAZE PRISON REFORMS THAT OFFER REAL HOPE OF ENDING THIS  
VIOLENT IMPASSE AND ACHIEVING A PEACEFUL AND HUMANITARIAN

SETTLEMENT OF THE THREE HUNGER STRIKES THAT ARE NOW NEARING THE  
POINT OF NOT RETURN

SURELY IT IS POSSIBLE TO COMPROMISE ON THE PRACTICAL ISSUES  
OF PRISON ADMINISTRATION WITHOUT COMPROMISING IN ANY WAY ON THE

BASIC PRINCIPLE OF OPPOSITION TO VIOLENCE SURELY THE LEADERS  
OF GREAT BRITAIN HAVE AN URGENT RESPONSIBILITY TO DO ALL

WITHIN THEIR POWER TO END THIS TRAGIC AND UNNECESSARY CRISIS  
EDWARD M KENNEDY UNITED STATES SENATE

DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN UNITED STATES SENATE

THOMAS P ONEILL JR SPEAKER HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HUGH L CAREY GOVERNOR STATE OF NEWYORK

COL 10

+0240/7+

889113 PO SW G

OSEAGRAM LN LFTC

GRS 320

UNCLASSIFIED

FM WASHINGTON 062202Z MAY 81

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1410 OF 6 MAY

AND TO NIO BELFAST, NIO LONDON.

INFO PRIORITY ALL CG'S IN THE U.S., DUBLIN, BIS NEW YORK.

M I P T (SAVING TO CONSULATES-GENERAL)

NORTHERN IRELAND HUNGER STRIKE

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF MESSAGE:

BEGINS

DEAR PRIME MINISTER THATCHER

WE WANT YOU TO KNOW PERSONALLY OF OUR DEEP CONCERN OVER THE SPECTRE OF WORSENING VIOLENCE AND TRAGEDY THAT THREATENED TO ENGULF NORTHERN IRELAND AFTER THE DEATH OF BOBBY SANDS.

IN RECENT MONTHS, WE HAVE PRAISED YOUR HOPEFUL INITIATIVE WITH PRIME MINISTER HAUGHEY OF IRELAND, AND WE HAVE LOOKED FORWARD TO FURTHER PROGRESS IN SECURING A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE CONFLICT.

THROUGHOUT THESE TRAGIC YEARS OF KILLING AND DESTRUCTION IN NORTHERN IRELAND, WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY AND UNEQUIVOCALLY CONDEMNED ALL VIOLENCE FROM ANY SOURCE.

BUT WE QUESTION A POSTURE OF INFLEXIBILITY THAT MUST LEAD INEVITABLY TO MORE SENSELESS VIOLENCE AND MORE NEEDLESS DEATH IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

WE URGE YOU TO ACT NOW, BEFORE ADDITIONAL LIVES ARE LOST, TO IMPLEMENT SENSIBLE AND REASONABLE REQUIREMENTS IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE MAZE PRISON - REFORMS THAT OFFER REAL HOPE OF ENDING THIS VIOLENT IMPASSE AND ACHIEVING A PEACEFUL AND HUMANITARIAN SETTLEMENT OF THE THREE HUNGER STRIKES THAT ARE NOW NEARING THE POINT OF NO RETURN.

SURELY IT IS POSSIBLE TO COMPROMISE ON THE PRACTICAL ISSUES OF PRISON ADMINISTRATION, WITHOUT COMPROMISING IN ANY WAY ON THE BASIC PRINCIPLE OF OPPOSITION TO VIOLENCE. SURELY THE LEADERS OF GREAT



BRITAIN HAVE AN URGENT RESPONSIBILITY TO DO ALL WITHIN THEIR POWER  
TO END THIS TRAGIC AND UNNECESSARY CRISIS.

SIGNED: EDWARD M KENNEDY  
UNITED STATES SENATE

THOMAS P O'NEILL JNR  
SPEAKER, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN  
UNITED STATES SENATE

HUGH O'CAREY  
GOVERNOR, STATE OF NEW YORK.

HENDERSON

**NORTHERN IRELAND LIMITED**

RID  
NAD  
INFORMATION DEPT  
WED  
MAED  
NEWS DEPT  
SECURITY DEPT  
PUSD  
PS  
PS/LPS  
PS/MR HURD

PS/MR RIDLEY  
PS/MR BLAKER  
PS/PUS  
SIR A ACLAND  
CHIEF CLERK  
MR ADAMS  
MR BULLARD  
MR FERGUSON  
LORD N G LENNOX  
MR BRAITHWAITE

**ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION  
NORTHERN IRELAND**

GRS 400

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

FM WASHINGTON 062200Z MAY 81  
TO IMMEDIATE F C O  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 1409 OF 6 MAY  
AND TO NIO BELFAST, NIO LONDON.  
INFO PRIORITY DUBLIN, BIS NEW YORK.  
INFO SAVING ALL CG'S IN U.S.

*I will have a draft  
reply in the week end box.*

*MS Paul*

**NORTHERN IRELAND HUNGER STRIKE**

1. KALICKI (SENATOR KENNEDY'S OFFICE) HAS GIVEN US THE TEXT OF A MESSAGE WHICH THE FOUR HORSEMEN HAVE TELEGRAPHED TO THE PRIME MINISTER (TEXT IN M I F T). THE MESSAGE HAS BEEN RELEASED BY THEM TO THE PRESS HERE.
2. KALICKI EMPHASISED THAT THE MESSAGE REFLECTED THE GENUINE CONCERN OF THE FOUR HORSEMEN AND THAT THEY HAD MADE A REAL EFFORT TO STRIKE A BALANCE. HE URGED US TO NOTE THEIR CONDEMNATION OF VIOLENCE WHICH HE CLAIMED WOULD BE VERY UNPOPULAR WITH THE IRISH AMERICAN COMMUNITY WHO WERE EXERTING ENORMOUS PRESSURE. KALICKI CLAIMED THAT THE MESSAGE WAS MORE MODERATE THAN MOST IRISH AMERICAN REACTION TO SANDS' DEATH. HE ADDED THAT SENATOR KENNEDY AND HIS COLLEAGUES FELT THAT SOME FURTHER CONCESSIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL PRISONERS IN NORTHERN IRELAND ON, FOR EXAMPLE, CLOTHING, SUCH AS HAD HELPED TO SETTLE THE LAST HUNGER STRIKE, COULD NOW BE MADE.
3. I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT WE ARE DOING OUR BEST HERE, IN NEW YORK AND IN OTHER PARTS OF THE U.S., THROUGH ALL MEANS AT OUR DISPOSAL, TO REFUTE THE VIEW WIDELY HELD IN THE U.S. AND REFLECTED IN THE FOUR HORSEMEN'S MESSAGE THAT THE ISSUE IS ONE OF PRISON DRESS OR PRISON ADMINISTRATION. WE ARE POINTING OUT THAT WHAT IS AT STAKE IS WHETHER SOMEONE WHO HAS BEEN CONVICTED OF A CRIME OF TERRORISM HAS THE RIGHT TO BE GIVEN SPECIAL TREATMENT AS THOUGHT HE HAD SIMPLY BEEN INVOLVED IN A POLITICAL MOVEMENT: WE ARE RUBBING IT HOME THAT WE DO NOT HAVE POLITICAL PRISONERS ANY MORE THAN DOES THE U S A, WHICH DOES NOT REGARD SOMEONE CONVICTED SAY OF ASSASSINATION OR THE ATTEMPT OF ASSASSINATION AS OTHER THAN A CRIMINAL.

HENDERSON

**NORTHERN IRELAND LIMITED**

RID  
NAD  
INFORMATION DEPT  
WED  
MAED  
NEWS DEPT  
SECURITY DEPT  
PUSD  
PS  
PS/LPS  
PS/MR HURD

PS/MR RIDLEY  
PS/MR BLAKER  
PS/PUS  
SIR A ACLAND  
CHIEF CLERK  
MR ADAMS  
MR BULLARD  
MR FERGUSSON  
LORD N G LENNOX  
MR BRAITHWAITTE

**ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION  
NORTHERN IRELAND**

RESTRICTED

UNCLASSIFIED *GPS 2/20*  
FM BONN 061600Z MAY 81  
TO ROUTINE FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 342 OF 06 MAY  
INFO NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE

*Goodall*

**NORTHERN IRELAND: DEATH OF SANDS.**

MOST FRG PAPERS TODAY CARRY FRONT PAGE REPORTS ON THE SITUATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND, WHICH THEY DESCRIBE AS QUOTE EXPLOSIVE UNQUOTE AND QUOTE TENSE UNQUOTE.

2. COMMENT SHOWS WIDESPREAD UNDERSTANDING FOR HMG'S POSITION. THERE ARE PASSING REMARKS OF RESPECT FOR SANDS'S QUOTE COURAGE AND WILL-POWER UNQUOTE (WELT) AND ABOUT THE PROPAGANDA SUCCESS OF HIS HUNGER STRIKE (GENERAL ANZEIGER). BUT BONNER RUNDSCHAU IS TYPICAL OF SEVERAL PAPERS IN SAYING THAT HMG'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS DEMANDS FOR POLITICAL STATUS IS SHARED BY EAST AND WEST EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS, AND THAT IF BRITAIN HAD MADE CONCESSIONS, ALMOST IRRESISTABLE PRESSURE WOULD HAVE ARISEN IN GERMANY, ITALY, FRANCE OR SPAIN TO MAKE SIMILAR CONCESSIONS TO TERRORISTS THERE. WELT SAYS THAT THE FACT THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION HAVE REMAINED FIRM UNDER PRESSURE, NOT ONLY FROM ULSTER BUT FROM ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD, SHOULD BE ACKNOWLEDGED. QUOTE TO MAKE THESE CRIMINALS POLITICAL PRISONERS WOULD BE TO JUSTIFY MURDER AND TERRORISM UNQUOTE.

3. SUEDEDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG SAYS THAT THE IRA ARE BANKING ON THE BRITISH BECOMING SICK AND TIRED OF NORTHERN IRELAND. BUT OTHER PAPERS STRESS THAT HATE WILL NOT TURN INTO BROTHERLY LOVE IN THE ABSENCE OF THE BRITISH, AND WITHDRAWAL WOULD ONLY MEAN THAT THE CATHOLICS WOULD BE LEFT TO THE PROTESTANTS DESIRE FOR REVENGE. FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE (GRUDINSKI) SAYS THAT SANDS' DEATH BRINGS A SOLUTION NO NEARER. IT HAS MERELY DRAWN WORLD ATTENTION TO THE WEAK POINT IN BRITISH DEMOCRACY. QUOTE THAT WAS THE REAL POINT OF THIS FRIGHTFUL UNDERTAKING ... TO STAGE A SENSATIONAL SHOW UNQUOTE.

4. OTHER PAPERS MENTION THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SANDS AND DEBUS (THE WEST GERMAN TERRORIST WHO DIED AFTER A HUNGER STRIKE LAST MONTH). SANDS WAS THE PRODUCT OF AN UPBRINGING IN AN ENVIRONMENT OF HATE AND FEAR. TO AN EXTENT HE WAS THE PRODUCT OF HISTORY. DEBUS WAS A PERIPHERAL FIGURE ON THE GERMAN TERRORIST SCENE. THE NORDRHEINISCHE ZEITUNG POINTS OUT THAT THE GERMAN TERRORIST MOVEMENT DOES NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT SUPPORT ANYWHERE TO WIN A PARLIAMENTARY BY-ELECTION.

FCO PLEASE PASS TO NIO.

GOODALL

**NORTHERN IRELAND LIMITED**

RID  
NAD  
INFORMATION DEPT  
WED  
MAED  
NEWS DEPT  
SECURITY DEPT  
PUSD  
PS  
PS/LPS  
PS/MR HURD

PS/MR RIDLEY  
PS/MR BLAKER  
PS/PUS  
SIR A ACLAND  
CHIEF CLERK  
MR ADAMS  
MR BULLARD  
MR FERGUSSON  
LORD N G LENNOX  
MR BRAITHWAITE

**ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION  
NORTHERN IRELAND**

THIS TELEGRAM  
WAS NOT  
ADVANCED

Case

Copy to 75 / Mr Atkins  
Mr Alexander No 10

no

Receive. Ruy L.

Prime Minister (2)  
Am

RID  
PS/LPS  
NAD  
5/5

889113 PO SW G  
OSEAGRAM LN LFTD

LFT052 CLF657 TCB961 EIE971 ICC785 QIA573 4-068452S121  
GELH CO UIAX 114  
TDMT NEW YORK NY 114/112 01 0631P EST

LORD CARRINGTON FOREIGN SECRETARY FOREIGN OFFICE  
LONDON SW1

THE SPECTACLE OF MR SANDS SLOW, AGONIZING DEATH IS HAVING A  
VERY SERIOUS EFFECT ON AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION WHICH CAN  
ONLY COMPOUND THE ~~SITUATION~~ ~~E E E~~ THE SITUATION IN ULSTER.  
HER MAJESTYS GOVERNMENT MUST DEAL FORECEFULLY WITH TERRORISM,  
BUT THE PRESENT SITUATION NOW GOES FAR BEYOND ANY QUESTION OF  
PRISON DISCIPLINE. ~~I AM~~  
~~E E E E E~~ PRISON DISCIPLINE. I AM AWARE THAT THIS CRISIS IS NOT  
WITHIN THE SPHERE OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE,  
OSEAGRAM LN LFTD ~~E E E E E~~ OFFICE, BUT ITS IMPLICATIONS AND  
EFFECTS ARE. I APPEAL TO YOU TO USE YOUR STATURE AND INFLUENCE  
IN THE CABINET TO HALT THIS WIDENING TRAGEDY BEFORE THE  
SITUATION IN THE NORTH TAKES ON ITS OWN MOMENTUM  
GOVERNOR HUGH L CAREY GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK

OSEAGRAM LN LFTD  
889113 PO SW G

PS TO THE PM.  
NO10 DOWNING STREET.

GPS 550

UNCLASSIFIED

FM WASHINGTON 052100Z

TO PRIORITY F C O

TELNO 1395 OF 5 MAY 1981,

AND TO NIO BELFAST, NIO LONDON,

INFO ROUTINE DUBLIN,

INFO SAVING ALL CONSULATES-GENERAL IN US.

NORTHERN IRELAND HUNGER STRIKE.

1. SENATOR KENNEDY ISSUED THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT AFTER SANDS' DEATH:

BEGINS: I AM DEEPLY SADDENED BY THE DEATH OF BOBBY SANDS, AND I SEND MY HEARTFELT PRAYERS TO ALL THE MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY.

HIS DEATH IS A SAD DAY FOR IRELAND AND FOR ALL WHO SEEK PEACE IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND AN END TO VIOLENCE THAT HAS CLAIMED SO MANY LIVES AND HAS SCARRED SO MANY MORE IN RECENT YEARS.

AT THIS TIME OF HEIGHTENED TENSION, I URGE ALL SIDES IN NORTHERN IRELAND TO RESIST CALLS FOR FURTHER VIOLENCE. IT WILL ONLY COMPOUND THIS LATEST TRAGEDY IF, OUT OF REACTIONS OF DESPERATION OR MOTIVES OF VENGEANCE, THE DEATH OF BOBBY SANDS SPARKS A NEW ROUND OF SENSELESS KILLING AND DESTRUCTION.

EACH NEW DEATH IN NORTHERN IRELAND IS ANOTHER DEATH TOO MANY. MORE THAN TWO THOUSAND CITIZENS HAVE LOST THEIR LIVES IN THE PRESENT ROUND OF VIOLENCE AND TERROR THAT HAVE PLAGUED THE PROVINCE SINCE 1969.

IF THE PAINFUL END OF THIS TRAGIC HUNGER STRIKE IS TO HAVE ANY HOPEFUL OR LASTING MEANING, SURELY IT IS THE LESSON THAT TOO MANY PEOPLE HAVE DIED. THE TIME HAS COME FOR ALL THOSE OF GOOD WILL ON BOTH SIDES OF THE COMMUNITY IN NORTHERN IRELAND — THE VAST MAJORITY OF PROTESTANTS AND CATHOLICS — TO DENOUNCE THE VOICES OF BIGOTRY, TO RENOUNCE THE PATH OF TERRORISM AND EXTREMISM, AND TO JOIN TOGETHER NOW IN A NEW AND MORE DEDICATED SEARCH FOR A COMMON PEACEFUL FUTURE.

/I COMMEND

NO 10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

I COMMEND THE MANY PERSONS WHO WORKED SO HARD IN RECENT DAYS IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND IN MANY OTHER LANDS IN THE SEARCH FOR A PEACEFUL AND HUMANITARIAN RESOLUTION OF THIS HUNGER STRIKE. I REGRET VERY MUCH THAT THE BRAVE INTERCESSION OF THE HOLY FATHER AND THE HOPEFUL INITIATIVE BY THE MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS DID NOT SUCCEED.

IN THE DISTRESS OF THE MOMENT, WE MUST NOT IGNORE THE FACT THAT THREE OTHER PRISONERS IN NORTHERN IRELAND ARE NEARING A CRITICAL PHASE IN THEIR OWN HUNGER STRIKES. WE MUST NOT YIELD TO TERRORISM. BUT WE ALSO MUST NOT YIELD TO IMPULSES OF INTRANSIGENCE THAT CAN ONLY FAN THE FLAMES OF GREATER TERRORISM.

I URGE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, WHICH HAS CLEAR RESPONSIBILITY FOR PRISON ADMINISTRATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND, TO ACT ON AN URGENT BASIS TO END ITS POSTURE OF INFLEXIBILITY, AND TO IMPLEMENT REASONABLE REFORMS CAPABLE OF ACHIEVING A HUMANITARIAN SETTLEMENT OF THE OTHER HUNGER STRIKES, SO THAT THE TRAGEDY OF BOBBY SANDS IS NOT REPEATED.

THE DEATH OF BOBBY SANDS IS A SYMPTOM OF A DEEPER CRISIS — A CRISIS THAT WILL GO ON AND ON AND ON IN NORTHERN IRELAND, UNTIL THE GOVERNMENT OF GREAT BRITAIN, THE GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND, AND ALL WHO TRULY SEEK AN END TO VIOLENCE CARE ENOUGH TO SPEAK AND WORK FOR PEACE.

ENDS.

HENDERSON

[THIS TELEGRAM WAS NOT ADVANCED]

NORTHERN IRELAND LIMITED

RID  
NAD  
INFORMATION DEPT  
WED  
MAED  
NEWS DEPT  
SECURITY DEPT  
PUSD  
PS  
PS/LPS  
PS/MR HURD

PS/MR RIDLEY  
PS/MR BLAKER  
PS/PUS  
SIR A ACLAND  
CHIEF CLERK  
MR ADAMS  
MR BULLARD  
MR FERGUSON  
LORD N G LENNOX  
MR BRAITHEWAITE

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION  
NORTHERN IRELAND

GRPS 243

C O N F I D E N T I A L

CONFIDENTIAL

FM DUBLIN 05:1805Z MAY 1981

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 141 OF 05 MAY 1981

AND TO IMMEDIATE NIO (BELFAST)

HUNGER STRIKE:

MY TELNO 139.

1. FROM THE TAOISEACH'S STATEMENT FOLLOWING SANDS'S DEATH AND THE ONE HE MADE YESTERDAY, IT SEEMS THAT HE STILL FIRMLY BELIEVES THAT IN SOME WAY THE STRIKE COULD BE ENDED BY MANIPULATING THE EXISTING PRISON REGULATIONS. I AM NOT SURE TO WHAT EXTENT HE REALLY BELIEVES THIS BUT I THINK IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO SUPPOSE THAT HE IS NOT BEING SINCERE. I AM QUITE SURE HE BELIEVED WHAT HE SAID WHEN HE SPOKE TO ME ON 26 FEBRUARY (MY TELNO 51). HE SHOULD OF COURSE KNOW BY NOW THAT THE VERY DIFFERING CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH WE WORK IN THE MAZE AND THE IRISH WORK IN PORT LAOISE MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR US TO FUDGE THE ISSUE IN THE WAY THE IRISH CAN (PALMER'S RECORD OF HIS TALK WITH MURRAY ON 2 APRIL). BUT ON THE EVIDENCE WE HAVE IT IS UNFORTUNATELY CLEAR THAT HE DOES NOT BELIEVE THIS.

2. ASSUMING PARA 1 REPRESENTS THE TAOISEACH'S SINCERE BELIEF THEN IT IS VERY FAR FROM THE WAY WE SEE THINGS, AND INDEED FROM WHAT HE WAS TOLD AT THE DECEMBER SUMMIT. AT THAT TIME HE APPEARED TO ACCEPT THAT THE PROVISIONALS WERE GOING FOR POLITICAL STATUS AND NOTHING ELSE. IF SO, IT IS NO LONGER THE CASE AND OUR DIFFERING VIEWS OF WHAT THE PROVISIONALS ARE AIMING FOR COULD LEAD TO A BIT OF A ROW. MR HAUGHEY HAS BEEN UNDER CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE DURING THE LAST FEW DAYS TO BE SEEN TO BE TALKING TOUGH WITH US AND I THINK WE MUST GIVE HIM CREDIT FOR WHAT IS SEEN HERE AS THE CALM LINE HE HAS TAKEN. HOWEVER, I THINK THE TIME HAS COME TO TRY AND RECONCILE OUR DIVERGENT VIEWS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THERE IS PLENTY OF CHAPTER AND VERSE SHOWING THAT THE HUNGER STRIKE IS AIMED AT POLITICAL STATUS. GIVING HIM A PIECE OF PAPER ON THESE LINES, TOGETHER WITH ANY NEW THOUGHTS WE MAY HAVE, WOULD BE BETTER THAN NOTHING.

FIGG

NORTHERN IRELAND LIMITED  
RID PS/MR HURD  
NAD PS/MR RIDLEY  
INFORMATION D PS/MR BLAKER  
WED PS/PUS  
MAED SIR A ACLAND  
NEWS D CHIEF CLERK  
SECURITY D MR ADAMS  
PUSD MR BULLARD  
PS MR FERGUSSON  
PS/LPS LORD N G LENNOX  
MR BRAITHWAITE

ADDITIONAL DISTN.  
NORTHERN IRELAND

CONFIDENTIAL

AS	N IRELAND OFFICE - PS TO SEC OF STATE
PS/PUS	RM 66 A/2 GGS
MR BULLARD	N IRELAND OFFICE [4 copies]
MR FERGUSSON	SIR K STOWE
HD/RID	MR MORIATY
HD/PUSD (2)	MR MARSHALL
HD/IPD	MR BUXTON
HD/NEWS DEPT	CABINET OFFICE - SIR R ARMSTRONG
...	DIO
...	NO 10 DOWNING STREET

~~RESIDENT CLERK~~

IMMEDIATE

ADVANCE COPIES

GRS 190

UNCLASSIFIED

FM DUBLIN 05/2915Z MAY 1981

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 139 OF 05 MAY

AND TO IMMEDIATE N I O (BELFAST) PRIORITY WASHINGTON

YOUR TELNO 661 TO WASHINGTON: DEATH OF SANDS

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF STATEMENT RELEASED BY THE TAOISEACH, MR HAUGHEY, SHORTLY AFTER 2 AM:

BEGINS

THE DEATH OF BOBBY SANDS IS YET ONE FURTHER TRAGEDY IN A LONG LINE OF SUCH TRAGEDIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND. IT MUST SURELY BRING HOME TO ALL CONCERNED THE NEED TO FIND A SOLUTION THAT WILL BRING A JUST AND LASTING PEACE TO THE AREA.

SINCE THE HUNGER STRIKE BEGAN I HAVE SOUGHT CONSTANTLY BY EVERY MEANS OPEN TO ME TO SECURE A HUMANITARIAN SOLUTION THAT WOULD AVOID LOSS OF LIFE. I DEEPLY REGRET THAT SUCH A SOLUTION COULD NOT HAVE BEEN FOUND THROUGH A MORE FLEXIBLE APPROACH TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE PRISON.



ADMINISTRATION OF THE PRISON.

TO THE SANDS FAMILY AND TO THE FAMILIES OF ALL THOSE WHO HAVE  
SUFFERED BEREAVEMENT OR INJURY, I EXTEND SINCERE SYMPATHY  
ON MY OWN BEHALF AND ON BEHALF OF THE IRISH GOVERNMENT.  
I APPEAL NOW TO ALL SECTIONS OF THE IRISH PEOPLE THAT THERE SHOULD  
BE NO FURTHER SUFFERING, INJURY OR LOSS OF LIFE, AND THAT THE SORROW  
AND GRIEF WHICH EXISTS SHOULD BE EXPRESSED IN A CALM AND DIGNIFIED  
MANNER.

ENDS

FIGG

NNNN

SENT AT / RECDA T 05/0945Z DH/

CAW

TO: (B)

CC: (B)

INFO: (B)

**CONFIDENTIAL**

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,  
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

4 May, 1981

Michael Alexander, Esq.,  
No. 10 Downing St.,  
LONDON SW1

*For Mr. Alexander, 6/5*

*Dear Michael,*

FUNERAL OF ROBERT SANDS

We expect Robert Sands to die later today, in which case his hunger strike would have lasted 64 days. The purpose of this letter is to set out the approach which we are adopting over the funeral arrangements.

The practice in Northern Ireland is for funerals to take place soon after the death, in this case probably on Wednesday or Thursday if he dies today. We have made special - and secure - arrangements for the autopsy to be carried out under the Coroner's direction with the minimum of delay, so that the body can be returned to the family as quickly as possible. Thereafter the arrangements are for the family to decide. We expect that the body will go to lie overnight in a church, with services in the evening and the following morning. In the afternoon the funeral procession would take place, with the burial in the Republican plot at Milltown Cemetery in West Belfast, the traditional place for such burials.

We have some reason to believe that the Church will do what it can to avoid the church service being exploited by the Provisionals: and possibly also to ensure that the funeral service is at a church sited to minimise the risks of sectarian confrontation during the procession. The process itself will attract thousands - probably tens of thousands - of people from Northern Ireland, the Republic, and elsewhere. The Provisionals will do all they can to attract as much publicity as possible, and the international press which is in Belfast in force, will respond. The proceedings will include, no doubt, the display of tricolours and the making of inflammatory speeches. Sands is reported to have asked for (and the Provisionals will anyway ensure that he gets) a full "military" funeral with masked men and fusillades of shots, uniformed men in marching order and so on.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Contd.....

CONFIDENTIAL

- 2 -

All of this will be deeply offensive to most people in the United Kingdom, and will undoubtedly make for damaging publicity abroad. It may be less offensive to the majority in Northern Ireland than might at first be supposed. There is a tradition that the communities should be allowed to bury their dead as they wish, and the Protestant leaders are unlikely to foment trouble at the funeral though no doubt some of them will complain loudly that HMG should have stopped the display.

My Secretary of State is well aware of public reaction, particularly in Great Britain, to the sort of display we are likely to see. The task of intervening in such a funeral, and of preventing the many illegalities (of a non-violent nature) likely to be committed in the course of it, would fall upon the RUC and the Army. He has discussed the operational implications with the Chief Constable and the GOC. Their judgment is that the security forces must not react to the funeral in a way which would worsen the security situation at a moment when sectarian sensitivities are most acute. They believe that Protestant interference with the funeral (which is relatively unlikely) must if necessary be prevented. The police may need to impose a minor route diversion to avoid a Protestant area. But they would not intervene during the funeral to prevent offences of a non-violent nature or to make arrests. Any intervention by the security forces to deal with propaganda or illegal symbolism (including the firing of volleys at the graveside) would be difficult and very dangerous, given the size of the crowds. Such attempts would almost certainly have to be in such strength as to provoke violence which could easily get out of control in such circumstances, with immediate riots and the danger of intervention by Protestant extremists. The usual steps will be taken, however, to obtain photographic and other evidence for subsequent prosecution.

The Secretary of State has no doubt that the operational judgment of the security force commanders must be supported in this matter, and he has agreed that they should proceed accordingly. He wants the Prime Minister to be aware of the position not merely because this judgment will be widely and vociferously criticised but also because that criticism will make it all the more important for the Government as a whole to be seen to support the security forces at a time when any impression of lack of confidence could threaten a dangerous destabilisation of the security situation.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to the Lord Chancellor, the Home Secretary, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Defence Secretary, the Leader of the House and Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Yours sincerely*  
*Mike Hopkins*  
M.W. HOPKINS

CONFIDENTIAL

*Ireland: Hunger Strike  
pc 3*

*fc. Smith*

UNCLASSIFIED

8851 - 1

OO UKREP BRUSSELS (DESKBY 040800Z)  
GRS 433  
UNCLASSIFIED  
DESKBY 040800Z  
FM FCO 011951Z MAY  
TO IMMEDIATE UKREP BRUSSELS  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 374 OF 1 MAY  
INFO IMMEDIATE UKDEL STRASBOURG AND LUXEMBOURG

YOUR TELNO 1477 : MESSAGE FROM EP SOCIALIST GROUP TO PRIME MINISTER

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF REPLY TO GO FROM SIR M BUTLER TO M. GLINNE. PLEASE DELIVER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

BEGINS:

'THE PRIME MINISTER HAS ASKED ME TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR MESSAGE THAT YOU SENT HER ON BEHALF OF THE SOCIALIST GROUP OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, ABOUT THE CURRENT HUNGER-STRIKE IN THE MAZE PRISON IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

'SHE WISHES TO ASSURE YOU THAT SHE IS DEEPLY CONCERNED WITH THE ISSUE AND WITH THE HEIGHTENED TENSIONS THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY THAT IT HAS BROUGHT ABOUT. SHE RECOGNISES THAT YOUR ANXIETY IS TO SAVE LIFE AND NOT TO SACRIFICE ANY PRINCIPLE.

'NEVERTHELESS THE HUNGER STRIKE IS IN SUPPORT OF A DEMAND FOR THE GRANTING OF POLITICAL STATUS, WHICH THE GOVERNMENT HAS REJECTED, AS HAS THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS, AND WHICH IS REGARDED THROUGHOUT THE UNITED KINGDOM AS INSUPPORTABLE. THE PROTESTING PRISONERS HAVE REPEATEDLY ASSERTED THAT THEIR CAMPAIGN IS AIMED AT POLITICAL STATUS. THIS CAMPAIGN SEEKS TO SECURE SPECIFIC CHANGES WHICH WILL RESULT IN A REGIME OF A KIND APPROPRIATE TO THEM AS PRISONERS OF WAR. THE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION ON THE PRISONERS' DEMANDS HAS BEEN REPEATEDLY MADE CLEAR SINCE THE BEGINNING LAST OCTOBER OF THE FIRST HUNGER-STRIKE. THE ISSUES ARE NO DIFFERENT TODAY.

'YOU SUGGEST THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD SEND A REPRESENTATIVE TO TALK TO MR SANDS IN THE PRISON. THIS WAS DONE LAST DECEMBER IN ORDER THAT THE HUNGER-STRIKERS SHOULD BE IN NO DOUBT

1

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

8851 - 1

ABOUT WHAT IS AVAILABLE UNDER THE EXISTING PRISON REGIME. SINCE THEN THE GREATEST PAINS HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO MAKE THE PROTESTING PRISONERS AWARE OF THE FACTS.

'I AM AFRAID THEREFORE THAT NO USEFUL PURPOSE WOULD BE SERVED BY SUCH A VISIT. THE GOVERNMENT IS NOT PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE PRISONERS. TO DO SO WOULD BE TO ABANDON FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES IN THE FACE OF THE THREAT OF VIOLENCE. THE GOVERNMENT IS CONVINCED THAT THAT WOULD LEAD DIRECTLY TO GREATER VIOLENCE. IT INTENDS THEREFORE TO STAND FIRM ON THE EXISTING POSITION. THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION TO MAINTAIN AND, WHERE PRACTICABLE, IMPROVE THE HIGH STANDARDS ALREADY ACHIEVED IN THE NORTHERN IRELAND PRISON REGIME. IT WILL CONTINUE TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE VIEWS OF RESPONSIBLE PEOPLE AND BODIES WHO HAVE HUMANITARIAN CONSIDERATIONS AT HEART. BY ITS ACTIONS LAST YEAR AND IN THE COURSE OF THE TWO HUNGER-STRIKES, IT HAS SHOWN ITS WILLINGNESS TO DO THIS.' ENDS.

CARRINGTON

NORTHERN IRELAND LIMITED	
RID	PS/MR HURD
NAD	PS/MR RIDLEY
INFORMATION D	PS/MR BLAKER
WED	PS/PUS
MAED	SIR A ACLAND
NEWS D	CHIEF CLERK
SECURITY D	MR ADAMS
PUSD	MR BULLARD
PS	MR FERGUSSON
PS/LPS	LORD N G LENNOX
ECD (1)	MR BRAITHEWAITE
ECD (2)	

ADDITIONAL DISTN.  
NORTHERN IRELAND

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



CONFIDENTIAL

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,  
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

30<sup>th</sup> April 1981

Michael Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1

*Reply sent.*

*Dear Michael,*

MAZE HUNGER STRIKE : MESSAGE FROM SOCIALIST GROUP OF EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

You will have seen the message to the Prime Minister from the Socialist Group, in UK Rep Brussels telegram no. 1477 of 29 April to FCO. It calls for the Prime Minister's immediate intervention in the crisis, and suggests that a representative should be sent to talk to Sands in an effort to break the deadlock.

During the last hunger strike, when Neil Blaney and others sought to move an urgent debate in the European Parliament, the Socialist Group led by Ernest Glinne were decisive in ensuring the defeat of the procedural motion. A similar move is on foot today, and (partly because John Hume's position is very different from what it was) it is very unlikely that the group will take the same forthright attitude when the procedural motion is debated early next week, especially if Sands should by then have died.

However, this makes it the more important that the Group should have a reasoned explanation of the Government's position, and why their suggestion would inevitably (and contrary to what they assert) involve a sacrifice of principle. It would obviously be best if a message could be delivered in reply while Sands remains alive.

... I attach a draft message which Sir Michael Butler might transmit to M. Glinne on the Prime Minister's behalf. He might think it more tactful to omit the clause in square brackets.

I am copying this to Francis Richards in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Subject to the Prime Minister's and Lord Privy Seal's agreement, I hope that the message can be sent to UK Rep Brussels soon.

*Your ever,  
Ry Harrington.*

R A HARRINGTON

CONFIDENTIAL

E.R.

Message from Sir Michael Butler, UK Rep, to M Ernest Glinne,  
Chairman of Socialist Group, European Parliament

mb

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for the message that you sent her on behalf of the Socialist Group of the European Parliament, about the current hunger-strike in the Maze Prison in Northern Ireland.

She wishes to assure you that she is deeply concerned with the issue and with the heightened tensions throughout the community that it has brought about. She recognises that your anxiety is to save life and not to sacrifice any principle.

Nevertheless the hunger-strike is in support of a demand for the granting of political status, which the Government has rejected, as has the European Commission on Human Rights, and which is ~~generally~~ regarded throughout the United Kingdom as insupportable. The protesting prisoners have repeatedly asserted that their campaign is aimed at political status. This campaign seeks to secure specific changes which will result in a regime of a kind appropriate to them as prisoners of war. The Government's position on the prisoners' demands has been repeatedly made clear since the beginning last October of the first hunger-strike, ~~which the European Parliament decided was not cause for an urgent debate~~. The issues are no different today.

You suggest that the Government should send a representative to talk to Mr Sands in the prison. This was done last December in order that the hunger-strikers should be in no doubt about what is available under the existing prison regime. Since then the greatest pains have been taken to make the protesting prisoners aware of the facts.

*I am afraid therefore that*

↳ No useful purpose could therefore be served by such a visit, unless the Government were prepared to negotiate with the prisoners. But to do that would be to abandon ~~sound~~ <sup>fundamental</sup> principles ~~of prison administration~~ in the face of the threat of violence.

The Government is convinced that that would lead directly to greater violence. It ~~is~~ <sup>intends</sup> therefore ~~right~~ to stand firm on the existing position, ~~both on grounds of practical expediency and of principle~~. This is ~~of course~~ consistent with the Government's intention to maintain and, where practicable, improve the high

**E.R.**

standards already achieved in the Northern Ireland prison regime. It will continue to take account of the views of responsible people and bodies who have humanitarian considerations at heart. By its actions last year and in the course of the two hunger-strikes, it has shown its willingness to do this.



GRS 550  
UNCLASSIFIED  
FM FCO 301733Z APR 81  
TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 651 OF 30 APRIL  
INFO IMMEDIATE BIS NEW YORK CG NEW YORK CG LOS ANGELES.

PS TO THE PM.  
NO10 DOWNING STREET.

*h.g.*  
*Paul*

NORTHERN IRELAND: HUNGER STRIKE.

1. FOLLOWING ARE THE TEXTS OF TELEGRAMS RECEIVED BY THE PRIME MINISTER FROM THE ARCHBISHOPS OF NEW YORK AND LOS ANGELES RESPECTIVELY

BEGINS

IN MY COMPASSIONATE CONCERN FOR ALL THE PEOPLE IN NORTHERN IRELAND I JOIN WITH CARDINAL O FIAICH AND BISHOP DALY IN THE URGENT PLEA FOR CHANGES IN PRISON REGULATIONS REGARDING CLOTHING AND WORK IN ORDER TO END THE HUNGER STRIKE. I ALSO UNITE WITH THEM IN PRAYER FOR SOLUTIONS THAT WILL ESTABLISH JUSTICE AND PEACE AND BRING AN END TO THE TRAGIC VIOLENCE ON THE STREETS IN THE NORTH OF IRELAND. SINCERELY YOURS, TERENCE CARDINAL COOKE ARCHBISHOP OF NEW YORK.  
ENDS

BEGINS

AS THE IRISH-BORN CARDINAL ARCHBISHOP OF LOS ANGELES WITH ITS NINE MILLION PEOPLE I EARNESTLY URGE YOU IN THE NAME OF ALL CONCERNED WITH HUMAN RIGHTS TO ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF CARDINAL O FIAICH AND BISHOP EDWARD DALY REGARDING PRISON DRESS AND PRISON WORK OF THE PRISONERS HELD IN THE PRESENT CRISIS. CARDINAL TIMOTHY MANNING ARCHBISHOP OF LOS ANGELES.  
ENDS

2. PLEASE REPLY TO COOKE ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES, BASED ON THE TEXT OF A TELEGRAM THE PRIME MINISTER SENT ON 29 APRIL TO CARDINAL O FIAICH (ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH AND ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMATE OF ALL IRELAND):

BEGINS

I HAVE BEEN ASKED TO REPLY TO YOUR TELEGRAM OF 24 APRIL TO THE PRIME MINISTER.

LIKE ALL PEOPLE WHO CARE FOR HUMAN LIFE THE PRIME MINISTER HOPES VERY MUCH THAT EVEN AT THIS LATE STAGE THE HUNGER STRIKERS WILL PAY HEED TO THE APPEAL WHICH CARDINAL O FIAICH HAS MADE AND WITH WHICH YOU HAVE ASKED TO BE ASSOCIATED AND WHICH HAS SUBSEQUENTLY BEEN ENDORSED BY HIS HOLINESS THE POPE.

THE PRIME MINISTER RECOGNISES THAT IN SENDING HER YOUR MESSAGE YOU ARE SEEKING TO SAVE LIFE AND NOT THE GRANTING OF POLITICAL STATUS, AND SHE IS AWARE OF THE PROPOSALS ON PRISON CLOTHING AND WORK WHICH CARDINAL O FIAICH AND BISHOP DALY PUT FORWARD LAST YEAR. THE

*/FACT*

FACT REMAINS THAT THE HUNGER STRIKE IS IN SUPPORT OF A DEMAND FOR POLITICAL STATUS: THE CONCESSION WHICH THE HUNGER STRIKERS ARE SEEKING ON DRESS AND ON WORK ARE IN PURSUIT OF THAT DEMAND. THE GOVERNMENT MADE IT POSITIVE ABSOLUTELY CLEAR ON THE QUESTION OF POLITICAL STATUS AND THE SO-CALLED FARE DEMANDS BEFORE THE FIRST HUNGER STRIKE BEGAN LAST OCTOBER. THE GOVERNMENT IS DETERMINED TO STAND FIRM ON THAT POSITION. TO DO OTHERWISE WOULD BE TO ABANDON SOUND PRINCIPLES IN THE FACE OF THE THREAT OF VIOLENCE.

WHILE DETERMINED TO STAND FIRM ON THE ISSUE OF POLITICAL STATUS AND WHAT GOES WITH IT, THE GOVERNMENT WILL ALSO MAINTAIN AND, AS PRACTICABLE, IMPROVE THE HIGH STANDARDS ALREADY ACHIEVED IN THE NORTHERN IRELAND PRISON REGIME. THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT CHANGES IN WORK AND CLOTHING ARE JUSTIFIED ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS, GIVEN THE ADOPTION OF CIVILIAN TYPE DRESS LAST OCTOBER AND THE WIDE RANGE OF WORK ALREADY AVAILABLE, BUT WILL CONTINUE TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE VIEWS OF RESPONSIBLE PEOPLE AND AND BODIES WHO HAVE HUMANITARIAN CONSIDERATION GENUINELY AT HEART. BY ITS ACTION LAST YEAR AND IN THE COURSE OF THE TWO HUNGER STRIKERS THE GOVERNMENT HAS SHOWN ITS WILLINGNESS TO DO THIS.

ENDS

3. PLEASE REPLY ALONG SIMILAR LINES TO ARCHBISHOP MANNING WITH THE SUBSTITUTION OF THE FOLLOWING FOR THE SECOND PARAGRAPH OF ABOVE DRAFT:

BEGINS

LIKE ALL PEOPLE WHO CARE FOR HUMAN LIFE, THE PRIME MINISTER HOPES VERY MUCH THAT EVEN AT THIS LATE STAGE THE HUNGER STRIKERS WILL PAY HEED TO THE APPEALS WHICH HAVE BEEN MADE TO THEM TO ABANDON THEIR ACTION.

ENDS

CARRINGTON

NORTHERN IRELAND LIMITED  
RID PS/MR HURD  
NAD PS/MR RIDLEY  
INFORMATION D PS/MR BLAKER  
WED PS/PUS  
MAED SIR A ACLAND  
NEWS D CHIEF CLERK  
SECURITY D MR ADAMS  
PUSD MR BULLARD  
PS MR FERGUSSON  
PS/LPS LORD N G LENNOX  
MR BRAITHEWAITE

ADDITIONAL DISTN.  
NORTHERN IRELAND

GR 500

RESTRICTED

FM CG NEW YORK 142105Z MAY  
TO PRIORITY WASHINGTON  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 12 OF 14 MAY 1981  
INFO PRIORITY F C O.

MY TELNO 11 OF 29 APRIL.

NORTHERN IRELAND: HUNGER STRIKE

1. DEMONSTRATIONS IN SUPPORT OF THE IRA, EXPLOITING THE HUNGER STRIKE OF SANDS AND OTHERS, HAVE BEEN MOUNTED DAILY SINCE 4 MAY OUTSIDE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT OFFICES ON THIRD AVENUE HERE (THE TRADE DEVELOPMENT OFFICE HAS SO FAR BEEN SPARED). A FEW DEMONSTRATORS HAVE APPEARED EACH MORNING AND LARGER NUMBERS, ON MOST DAYS BETWEEN 50-200, HAVE JOINED THEM IN THE AFTERNOON. THE DEMONSTRATORS ARE MUCH IN EVIDENCE BECAUSE THEY OCCUPY ROADWAY SPACE DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF THE MAIN ENTRANCE TO OUR BUILDING, THEY SHOUT AND SCREAM A LOT, USING LOUDSPEAKERS, AND INSULTING REMARKS HAVE OCCASIONALLY BEEN DIRECTED AT STAFF ENTERING OR LEAVING THE BUILDING. AS BEFORE HOWEVER A STRONG POLICE PRESENCE HAS KEPT THE DEMONSTRATORS UNDER STRICT CONTROL AND NORMALLY WITHIN WOODEN BARRIERS, THOUGH THE SPACE ALLOWED TO DEMONSTRATORS IS EXPANDED ACCORDING TO THEIR NUMBERS AND ON SATURDAY, 9 MAY, WHEN THERE WAS A LARGE DEMONSTRATION BY ABOUT 6,000 PEOPLE, THEY BLOCKED THIRD AVENUE ENTIRELY. THE NUMBER OF BOMB THREATS HAS DIMINISHED.

2. A FLAT-BED TRUCK HAS FORMED A BASE FOR THE DEMONSTRATORS. IT CARRIES AMPLIFYING EQUIPMENT AND A CAGE REPRESENTING THE MAZE PRISON. THE TRUCK HAS BEEN PARKED FOR A WEEK IN A TRAFFIC LANE NORMALLY RESERVED FOR BUSES, A POWER CABLE HAS BEEN CONNECTED TO IT FROM A NEARBY BAR, AND ON 9 MAY AN ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC LANE WAS BLOCKED BY STALLS SELLING IRA T-SHIRTS AND OTHER MEMENTOES. A FURTHER LARGE DEMONSTRATION IS EXPECTED THIS SATURDAY. OUR STAFF ARE CARRYING ON AS USUAL THROUGHOUT ALL THIS AND DOING THEIR BEST TO IGNORE THE DEMONSTRATORS AND THEIR INFLAMMATORY AND MENDACIOUS SLOGANS, BUT IT IS NOT EASY.

3. SO FAR, THE DEMONSTRATIONS HAVE BEEN LARGELY CONFINED TO OUR OFFICES AND TO THE UN HEADQUARTERS. THE LATEST DEMONSTRATION TECHNIQUE IS TO FORM UP BY ST PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL, AND MOVE THENCE TO OUR OFFICES AND ON TO THE UN AND BACK AGAIN, WITH SPEECHES AND RELIGIOUS SERVICES (ON THE DEATH OF SANDS AND HUGHES) ON THE WAY. THERE HAVE BEEN VERY MINOR DEMONSTRATIONS IN FRONT OF BRITISH AIRWAYS AND THE BTA; BRITISH COMMERCIAL FIRMS HAVE SO FAR BEEN SPARED. THERE IS NATURALLY SOME CONCERN AMONG THE BRITISH BUSINESS COMMUNITY, THOUGH THEY ARE NOT SERIOUSLY WORRIED AND ARE SIMPLY KEEPING THEIR HEADS

RESTRICTED

/DORN.

RESTRICTED

DOWN. AFTER THE IRA PROPAGANDA EXCESSES OF LAST WEEK AND THE SCANDALOUSLY ONESIDED REPORTING OF THE AMERICAN MEDIA, MORE OBJECTIVE COMMENT HAS STARTED TO APPEAR. IN THIS RESPECT THE TV INTERVIEWS GIVEN HERE BY MR CECIL PARKINSON AND BY THE NORTHERN IRISH NONCONFORMIST MINISTERS NOW VISITING THE UNITED STATES HAVE HAD A GOOD EFFECT.

4. FOLLOWING DISCUSSION WITH HM AMBASSADOR AND SIR A PARSONS ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE DEMONSTRATIONS AND THEIR EFFECT UPON VIP VISITS, ETC., I CALLED YESTERDAY ON THE POLICE COMMISSIONER FOR NEW YORK CITY AND COMPLAINED ABOUT THE HARASSMENT TO WHICH WE ARE BEING SUBJECTED AND APPARENT CONTINUANCE OF A PERMANENT IRA DEMONSTRATION IN FRONT OF OUR DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR PREMISES. I ASKED THAT, AS A FIRST STEP, THE DEMONSTRATORS SHOULD BE MOVED FURTHER AWAY FROM THE BUILDING. MR MCGUIRE MADE NO PROMISES, BUT SAID THAT HE WOULD URGENTLY STUDY MY REQUEST IN CONSULTATION WITH THE US ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE. HE AND HIS STAFF PREDICTABLY ARGUED THAT THE IRA DEMONSTRATORS WERE UNDER EFFECTIVE POLICE CONTROL (WHICH IS TRUE) AND EXPLAINED WHY, IN THE SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF NEW YORK WITH MANY DEMONSTRATIONS, THE POLICE FOUND IT GOOD TACTICS TO BE LIBERAL. RECORD OF CONVERSATION FOLLOWS BY BAG. I AWAIT MR MCGUIRE'S REPLY WITH INTEREST.

OVERTON

NORTHERN IRELAND LIMITED

RID  
NAD  
INFORMATION DEPT  
WED  
MAED  
NEWS DEPT  
SECURITY DEPT  
PUSD  
PS  
PS/LPS  
PS/MR HURD

PS/MR RIDLEY  
PS/MR BLAKER  
PS/PUS  
SIR A ACLAND  
CHIEF CLERK  
MR ADAMS  
MR BULLARD  
MR FERGUSSON  
LORD N G LENNOX  
MR BRAITHWAITE  
*MR DAY*  
*MR GARE*

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION  
NORTHERN IRELAND

2  
RESTRICTED

NORTHERN IRELAND: ADVANCE COPIES 76 48

PS	N IRELAND OFFICE	PS TO SEC OF STATE
PS PS		RM 66 A/2 GGS
PS/PUS	N IRELAND OFFICE	[4 copies]
MR BULLARD		
MR FERGUSSON		SIR K STOWE
HD/RID		MR MORIATY
HD/PUSD (2)		MR MARSHALL
HD/EPD		MR BUXTON
HD/NEWS DEPT	CABINET OFFICE	SIR R ARMSTRONG
<i>U.D. (EC) F..2</i>		DIO
...	NO 10 DOWNING STREET	

~~RESIDENT OFFICE~~

to FCO

PP NIO 918889

GRS 160

ADVANCE COPY

*ms*  
*Shelley Ryan*  
*Plum*

UNCLASSIFIED  
 FM UKREP BRUSSELS 291537Z APR 81  
 TO PRIORITY FCO  
 TELEGRAM NUMBER 1477 OF 29 APRIL

THE SOCIALIST GROUP OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT HAVE ASKED US BY PHONE TO PASS ON THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE

TO MRS THATCHER FROM SOCIALIST GROUP OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

MEMBERS OF THE SOCIALIST GROUP OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT REQUEST YOUR IMMEDIATE INTERVENTION IN THE NORTHERN IRELAND CRISIS. WE SUGGEST THAT THE GOVERNMENT SEND A REPRESENTATIVE TO TALK WITH MR SANDS IN AN EFFORT TO BREAK THE DEADLOCK. NO SACRIFICE OF PRINCIPLE IS INVOLVED BY THE GOVERNMENT IN SUCH AN ACTION. THE COST OF INACTION MAY BE MUCH HIGHER. THE SOCIALIST GROUP URGES YOU TO ACT.

SIGNED ERNEST GLINNE  
 CHAIRMAN OF THE SOCIALIST GROUP  
 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

SIGNED ERNEST GLINNE  
CHAIRMAN OF THE SOCIALIST GROUP  
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

FCO ADVANCE TO:  
FCO - HD REP OF IRELAND DEPT  
NO 10 - ALEXANDER  
NIO - PS/SOFS

BUTLER

(ADVANCED AS REQUESTED)

NNNN

29/1550

NORTHERN IRELAND: ADVANCE COPIES

18

**IMMEDIATE**

PS

N IRELAND OFFICE - PS TO SEC OF STATE  
RM 66 A/2 GGS

PS/LPS

PS/PUS

N IRELAND OFFICE [4 copies]

MR BULLARD

MR FERGUSSON

SIR K STOWE

HD/RID

MR MORIATY

HD/PUSD (2)

MR MARSHALL

HD/IPD

MR BUXTON

HD/NEWS DEPT

CABINET OFFICE - SIR R ARMSTRONG  
DIO

... ..  
| ... ..  
... ..

NO 10 DOWNING STREET

~~REGISTER CLERK~~

OO NIO (BELFAST)

GRPS 300

C O N F I D E N T I A L

FM DUBLIN 29:1345Z APRIL 1981

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 132 OF 29 APRIL 1981

AND TO IMMEDIATE NIO (BELFAST)

**IMMEDIATE**

**HUNGER STRIKE**

1. YOU MAY FIND IT USEFUL TO HAVE MY ASSESSMENT OF THE LIKELY IMPACT IN DUBLIN OF SANDS' DEATH.
2. DURING THE LAST HUNGER STRIKE WE WERE REPEATEDLY TOLD THAT PEOPLES MOOD WOULD CHANGE DRAMATICALLY IF THERE WERE TO BE A DEATH. I DO NOT THINK THAT THAT IS LIKELY TO BE TRUE THIS TIME ROUND BECAUSE PUBLIC INDIFFERENCE IS MUCH MORE MARKED NOW. (BUT I WOULD BE LESS CERTAIN OF CONTINUING APATHY IF FRANCIS HUGHES ALSO DIED. SOME PARALLEL MIGHT BE DRAWN WITH THE WAY IN WHICH THE EXECUTION OF THE 1916 LEADERS OVER A PERIOD AROUSED PUBLIC OPINION.)
3. WHILE I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT SANDS' DEATH WILL HAVE MUCH IMPACT ON ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONS, IF REACTIONS IN THE NORTH TO ANY DEATH

3. WHILE I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT SANDS' DEATH WILL HAVE MUCH IMPACT ON ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONS, IF REACTIONS IN THE NORTH TO ANY DEATH ARE VIOLENT AND SUSTAINED THERE WILL BE AN INEVITABLE KNOCK-ON EFFECT DOWN HERE. THE TAOISEACH TOLD ME LAST TIME I SAW HIM THAT HE FEARED A PROTESTANT PARAMILITARY CAMPAIGN IN THE SOUTH. ALSO HE WOULD FEEL BOUND TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS TO US IF THE MINORITY COMMUNITY IN THE NORTH WERE TO BE ATTACKED BY THE PROTESTANTS.

4. SHORT OF SERIOUS PROBLEMS ON THESE LINES, MR HAUGHEY HAS LITTLE OPTION BUT TO CONTINUE WITH THE GENERAL LINE HE HAD BEEN PURSUING UP TILL NOW. SOME OF HIS CRITICS MIGHT POINT OUT THAT HIS MUCH VAUNTED 'UNIQUE RELATIONSHIP' WITH THE PRIME MINISTER HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO SAVE SANDS. AND OF COURSE WHAT MUST BOTHER HIM IS THAT THE HUNGER STRIKERS HAVE INTERFERED WITH HIS ELECTION PLANS. AS REGARDS THE JOINT STUDIES, I AM SURE HE WOULD WANT THEM TO CONTINUE, AS MR O'ROURKE MADE CLEAR WHEN I CALLED ON HIM ON MONDAY FOR A GENERAL CHAT.

FIGG

NNNN

IMMEDIATE

SENT AT 29:1414Z CB

RECD AT 29:1414Z APH



POPE'S BID FAILS

THE POPE'S ENVOY TO ULSTER, FATHER JOHN NAGEE, IS FLYING BACK TO  
ROME LATER TODAY.

BID TO PERSUADE IRA HUNGER STRIKERS TO GIVE UP THEIR PROTEST  
HAS FAILED.

-- 1111

CONFIDENTIAL

London copies by myfox

IMMEDIATE PLEASE.

11/5

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

fc

Prmie Austin

(2)

Ans

RECORD OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S DISCUSSION WITH FATHER MAGEE -  
29 APRIL 1981 AT 12.30 PM IN STORMONT CASTLE

Father Magee explained that he came as the personal, not the diplomatic, representative of the Pope. He brought a message to the Secretary of State from the Pope. This was that he came on a mission of peace, goodwill and concern deeply felt by the Pope for strife anywhere, and especially where life was in danger. The Pope had spoken out very clearly against violence, for example at Drogheda, and his condemnation of violence included those engaged in violence against themselves. The Pope wanted to offer help in any way he could to avoid the loss of life which was now in prospect. He had sent Father Magee not as a negotiator but as a personal representative to see whether there was any way of stopping this madness.

2. Father Magee expressed gratitude for the kindly and helpful response he had had since the beginning of his visit. He had had a valuable conversation with Mr Blaker and Mr Alison at London Airport (though he was perturbed that news of his visit had somehow become public - that might have made Sands unwilling to see him).

3. Father Magee gave a detailed account of his visit to Sands.

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

He was surprisingly well, and asked Father Magee to thank the Pope for sending a representative. Father Magee explained to Mr Sands at length the Pope's condemnation of violence, to which Sands responded by explaining his stand. In response to Father Magee's plea to end the hunger strike, Sands responded "do not ask me that". Father Magee emphasized to Sands that this was a personal plea from the Pope, to which Sands responded that the Pope would understand that the people of Northern Ireland are a demotrodden people.

4. Father Magee said he had asked Sands to provide time for possibilities to be explored by ending his hunger strike, if only temporarily - say for three days. Sands said that he would end it immediately for five days provided that certain conditions were satisfied. The Secretary of State intervened to emphasize that while he was willing to hear what Father Magee had undertaken to pass on, he must re-emphasize that his meeting with Father Magee was taking place on the basis that there was no question of any form of negotiation. Father Magee recognized that.

5. Sands' conditions were:

- a) An official from the NIO would visit him to discuss "the whole question"
- b) Two priests should be present as guarantors
- c) Three other prisoners (not the hunger strikers, but presumably the "OCs" within the prison) should be present

Sands emphasized that he was not demanding political status,

**CONFIDENTIAL**

but sought satisfaction on the five demands. If this were achieved, he would not begin his hunger strike again at the end of the five days.

6. Sands said he realised that to set conditions for ending the strike was not the answer Father Magee wanted. But it would serve no useful purpose for Father Magee to come back again without a representative from the HIO.

7. Father Magee asked whether there was any hope of movement on these well-known issues. He thought there was not any great question of principle involved.

8. The Secretary of State emphasised his respect for the Pope's message and his personal respect for the Pope. It was quite clear, however, that Sands was setting conditions. He had explained that there could be no negotiation: that was what Sands was trying to initiate. The Government had no intention of conceding political status but the excellence of the facilities at the Maze Prison and the Government's record of improving them (which they would continue even if Sands died) showed that they had acted humanely and compassionately. In particular, the Government had responded to responsible criticisms including the suggestions made by the ECHR. Improvement in conditions in the prison had largely overtaken three of the five demands. The response of the prisoners had been to intensify their demands. The Government would not grant demands made in this way, the effect of which would be to grant special status to special people, quite inconsistent with terrorists. This suggestion had been made by the Pope himself.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

the Pope's message at Drogheda. The effect of giving in to the demands would be to create a regime within the prison in which a particular group made their own decisions as to what they wore, the nature of their work and whether they worked, and which of their fellow prisoners they would associate with. To concede that would be wrong - and would also provoke a violent reaction within the Province which would threaten innocent lives:

9. Father Magee said he thought that the prisoners would not be inflexible: they wanted evidence of goodwill because promises had been made to them at the end of the last hunger strike and had not been kept.

10. The Secretary of State emphasised to Father Magee that no promises had been made at the end of the last hunger strike. That fact was well known to Sands. The Secretary of State handed to Father Magee documents including notices issued to the prisoners at the end of the last hunger strike which would state the position quite clearly.

11. Father Magee expressed the hope at the end of the meeting that there would be some reaction to the Pope's plea. He thought it likely that he would leave Northern Ireland on the following day unless there were developments which required him to stay. He thought it likely that he would meet Sands' family later in the day, and he had also asked Cardinal O'Flaich to see whether arrangements could be made for Father Magee to visit families of members of the Security Forces who had been killed by terrorists. This suggestion had been made by the Pope himself.

London copies by [unclear]  
immediate [unclear]

**CONFIDENTIAL**

He would also like to pass on to the three other hunger strikers the Pope's plea to end their fast because the message applied just as much to them as to Sands. The Secretary of State raised no objection to his doing so.

12. At the end of the meeting the Secretary of State explained, and Father Magee accepted, that the Secretary of State could not see Father Magee again because to do so would risk creating the impression that some form of negotiation was going on. There was no question of negotiation and the Secretary of State would need to continue to make that quite clear.

R Harrington

R A HARRINGTON  
Private Secretary  
29 April 1981

cc. PS/SJS B+L - m  
PS/Mr Alison B+L - m  
PS/PUS B+L - m  
Mr Blalock  
Mr Marshall - m  
Mr Wyatt  
Mr Gulliland  
Mr Buxton - m  
Mr Ranson  
Mr Clatterwick

**CONFIDENTIAL**

GPS 380  
UNCLASSIFIED

FM WASHINGTON 282220Z APR 81

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NO 1319 OF 28 APRIL

INFO PRIORITY NIO LONDON, NIO BELFAST, DUBLIN, BIR NEW YORK

PS TO THE PM.

NO 10, DOWNING STREET.

NORTHERN IRELAND: U.S. MEDIA COVERAGE OF HUNGER STRIKE

*mb*

1. IN CONTRAST WITH THE INTEREST SHOWN BY THE US MEDIA DURING THE 1980 HUNGER STRIKE THERE WAS VIRTUALLY NO REPORTING OR EDITORIAL COMMENT ON THE SANDS HUNGER STRIKE UNTIL THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF HIS CANDIDATURE FOR PARLIAMENT. INSTEAD COMMENT, ALMOST ENTIRELY FAVOURABLE, CONCENTRATED ON THE PRIME MINISTER'S INITIATIVE FOR JOINT STUDIES WITH THE IRISH GOVERNMENT AND THE FORMATION OF THE NEW FRIENDS OF IRELAND GROUP IN CONGRESS.
2. IN THE LAST TWO TO THREE WEEKS, THIS HAS CHANGED ENTIRELY. COVERAGE HAS INCREASED RAPIDLY FROM A LOW LEVEL (MRS MCALISKEY'S VISIT FROM 13 TO 14 APRIL PRODUCED LITTLE PUBLICITY) TO A POSITION IN WHICH MOST MAJOR NEWSPAPERS, THE TV AND RADIO NETWORKS AND LOCAL NEWS PROGRAMMES ARE CARRYING ACCOUNTS OF LATEST DEVELOPMENTS EACH DAY, FOCUSSED ESPECIALLY ON VIOLENCE IN STREET DEMONSTRATIONS BECAUSE OF THEIR VISUAL IMPACT.
3. THE H-BLOCKS PROTEST AND THE ISSUES BEHIND IT HAVE NOT BEEN EXAMINED IN DEPTH, PARTLY BECAUSE IRA PROPAGANDA HAS CONCENTRATED DURING THIS HUNGER STRIKE ON THE QUESTION OF POLITICAL STATUS RATHER THAN THE 5 SPECIFIC DEMANDS FOR CHANGES IN THE PRISON REGIME: PARTLY ALSO PERHAPS BECAUSE THE END OF THE DIRTY PROTEST REDUCED THE PLAUSIBILITY HERE OF CLAIMS THAT HMG WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR INFLECTING INTOLERABLE PRISON CONDITIONS. THE ELECTION OF SANDS WAS CARRIED WIDELY BUT WAS REGARDED MORE AS A CURIOSITY RATHER THAN AN EVENT OF MAJOR SIGNIFICANCE. AS THE NEW YORK TIMES PUT IT IN AN EDITORIAL ON 22 APRIL, QUOTE IT WAS BOBBIE SANDS' PLIGHT, NOT HIS POLITICS, THAT BECAME THE CENTRAL ISSUE UNQUOTE.
4. AMONG EDITORIALS IN THE LAST TWO WEEKS THE ONLY SERIOUSLY JARRING NOTE WAS STRUCK BY THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE (15 APRIL) WHICH CRITICISED THE PRIME MINISTER AND ALLEGED COMPLACENCY. REPORTING OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS HAS GENERALLY BEEN FACTUAL, WITH A TENDENCY TO DRAMATISE THE CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE ARMY AND DEMONSTRATORS AND TO EMPHASISE THE RISK OF OPEN CIVIL WAR IF SANDS DIES. EDITORIAL COMMENT GENERALLY, WHILE OFFERING CRITICISM OF ALLEGED INFLEXIBILITY IN PRISON ADMINISTRATION, HAS SO FAR FULLY BACKED THE DECISION NOT TO ACCORD POLITICAL STATUS.

HENDERSON

NORTHERN IRELAND LIMITED  
RID PS/MR HURD  
NAD PS/MR RIDLEY  
INFORMATION D PS/MR BLAKER  
WED PS/PUS  
MAED SIR A ACLAND  
NEWS D CHIEF CLERK  
SECURITY D MR ADAMS  
PUSD MR BULLARD  
PS MR FERGUSSON  
PS/LPS LORD N G LENNOX  
MR BRAITHEWAITE

ADDITIONAL DISTN.  
NORTHERN IRELAND

THIS TELEGRAM  
WAS NOT  
ADVANCED

B.R.

PA (CF  
file)  
MS  
1/5

MR SANDERS

After consultations between NIO and FCO,  
it was agreed that the visit of the Pope's  
personal envoy should be trailed to PA and  
Reuters to avoid the risk of a misinterpreted  
"secret" visit.

2. This has now been done and the subject  
could, therefore, crop up in PM's PQs.

NEVILLE GAFFIN  
28 April, 1981.



HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL TOMAS OFIAICH,  
ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH AND PRIMATE OF ALL IRELAND,  
ARA COELI, ARMAGH, N. IRELAND.

---

*Despatched  
by Tel via  
Sutcliffe  
28/4/81*

*Ireland*

Thank you for the telegram which you sent me yesterday about the Maze hunger strike.

Like all people who care for human life I hope very much that even at this late stage the hunger strikers will pay heed to your appeal.

I recognise that in sending me your message you are seeking to save life and not the granting of political status. I am also aware of those characteristics of the NI prison population to which you refer: and of the proposals on prison dress and work that you and Bishop Daly put forward last year. The fact remains that the hunger strike is in support of a demand for political status: the concessions which the hunger strikers are seeking on dress and work are in pursuit of that demand. The Government made its position absolutely clear on the questions of political status and the so-called five demands before the first hunger strike began last October. We are determined to stand firm on that position. To do otherwise would be to abandon sound principles in the face of the threat of violence.

You also urge me to send an NIO representative to talk to prisoners. This was done last December in order that the hunger strikers should be in no doubt about what the prison regime afforded. I do not believe that there can now be any doubt about this, given the extensive efforts that have been made to publish the facts. I am afraid I therefore see no useful purpose that could be served in a visit of the kind you propose.

/Could I say

Could I say finally, that, while determined to stand firm on the issue of political status and what goes with it, the Government will also maintain and, as practicable, improve the high standards already achieved in the NI prison regime. I do not believe that changes in work and clothing are justified on humanitarian grounds, given the adoption of civilian-type dress last October and the wide range of work already available. But the Government will continue to take account of the views of responsible people and bodies who have humanitarian considerations genuinely at heart. I believe that by its actions last year and in the course of the two hunger strikes it has shown its willingness to do this.

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,  
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

Michael Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street  
SW1

*Respected,*

*Paul*

*28* April 1981

*Dear Michael*

I attach a draft reply to Cardinal O'Fiaich's telegram of yesterday: there would be advantage in your sending a telegram reply immediately but we propose, with your agreement, to release the text in advance to the Cardinal before he becomes involved in Father Magee's visit later this afternoon. *Could you give me clearance as soon as possible?*

*(I am copying this letter & enclosure to Francis Richards (F20).)*

*Yours sincerely*  
*Mike Hopkins*

M W Hopkins

ah

ADDRESSEE'S REFERENCE.....

To	Enclosures	Copies to be sent to
<p>His Eminence Cardinal            Tomas O'Flaich,            Archbishop of Armagh &amp;            Primate of All Ireland,            Ara Coeli,            Armagh, N. Ireland.</p>		
(Full Postal Address)		(Full Address, if Necessary)

LETTER DRAFTED FOR SIGNATURE BY PRIME MINISTER  
 (Name of Signatory)

Thank you for the telegram which you sent me yesterday about the Maze hunger strike.

Like all people who care for human life I hope very much that even at this late stage the hunger strikers will pay heed to your appeal.

I recognise that in sending me your message you are seeking to save life and not the granting of political status. I am also aware of those characteristics of the NI prison population to which you refer: and of the proposals on prison dress and work that you and Bishop Daly put forward last year. The fact remains that ~~there is still nothing in what the hunger strikers have said, or has been said on their behalf, to suggest that these changes would end either the hunger strike or the prison protests. On the contrary, it has been said consistently that the hunger strike is in support of a demand for political status: and of the so-called 5 demands which would give expression to that status in the prisons.~~ *The concessions which the ~~so-called~~ hunger strikers are seeking on dress & work are in pursuit of that demand.* The Government made its position absolutely clear on the questions of political status and *so-called* the 5 demands before the first hunger strike began last October.

We are

~~It is~~ determined to stand firm on that position. To do otherwise would be to abandon sound principles in the face of the threat of violence.

You also urge me to send an NIO representative to talk to prisoners. This was done last December in order that the hunger strikers should be in no doubt about what the prison regime afforded. I do not believe that there can now be any doubt about this, given the extensive efforts that have been made to publish the facts. I am afraid I therefore see no useful purpose that could be served in a visit of the kind you propose.

Could I say finally, that, while determined to stand firm on the issue of political status and what goes with it, the Government <sup>will</sup> also ~~remains determined to~~ maintain and, as ~~necessary and~~ practicable, ~~to~~ improve the high standards already achieved in the NI prison regime. I do not believe that changes in work and clothing are justified on humanitarian grounds, given the adoption of civilian-type dress last October and the wide range of work already available. But the Government will continue to take account of the views of responsible people and bodies who have humanitarian considerations genuinely at heart. I believe that by its actions last year and in the course of the two hunger strikes it has shown that <sup>it</sup> ~~it is ready~~ ~~and~~ <sup>is</sup> willing <sup>to</sup> ~~act on that determination.~~ <sup>do this.</sup>



## CABINET OFFICE

With the compliments of  
Sir Robert Armstrong KCB, CVO  
*Secretary of the Cabinet*

M. O'D. B. Alexander, Esq

70 Whitehall, London SW1A 2AS  
Telephone: 01-233 8319



Prime Minister  
Mr. [unclear]  
[unclear] 28/4  
(2)

CABINET OFFICE

70 Whitehall, London SW1A 2AS Telephone 01-233 8319

From the Secretary of the Cabinet: Sir Robert Armstrong KCB, CVO

Ref: A04767

27th April 1981

As I told you, Dermot Nally rang up from Dublin this morning to make two points, following a long discussion he had had with the Taoiseach.:

- (i) They would be very interested in our view about how things were likely to develop.
- (ii) They wondered whether we might simply let Sands go, on the ground that, as a Member of Parliament, he was unique.

I discussed all this with you on the telephone before and after lunch, and then rang Nally back. I spoke as follows:

For various reasons, and in particular because of the electoral prospects, North and South of the Border, the situation now was more inflammable, and the flash-point was lower than in December 1980. There was in any case a risk of escalation of violence, if and when Sands died. We were determined that we must do nothing that might upset the precarious balance or de-stabilise the community, and that we must contain and control violence from either side even-handedly. If violence escalated it could spread across the border. It was in neither of our interests for that to happen. We much appreciated the continuing cross-border co-operation and looked forward to it continuing as effectively as ever.

We thought that perhaps the ECHR move had been misread by the PIRA as a ploy to get ourselves off the hook and as a sign of weakness. It was not that. That being said, the ECHR was there and could be used again, if, for example another prisoner complained. The avenue was open and we would facilitate it again if the occasion arose. But there could be no question of negotiations between the British Government and the PIRA under cover of the ECHR commissioners.

/The loyalist

Sir Kenneth Stowe, KCB, CVO

The loyalist opinion was acutely sensitive and suspicious following the decision to let the three members of the Irish Dail see Sands and the ECHR moves over the weekend. We had to be extremely careful if we were to avoid inflaming Protestant opinion to the point where we once again saw a recrudescence of Protestant violence. We were in no doubt that to release Sands now would have such an effect on Protestant opinion. We could not argue that he was unique because he was a Member of Parliament, because the Committee of Privileges was on record as saying that a Member of Parliament in prison should enjoy no privileges by virtue of being a Member of Parliament. It really was up to Sands now whether he lived or died; and time might be very short.

Dermot Nally took note of all this. He did not press further on the release of Sands; indeed, he implied that he accepted the strength of the arguments against it.

I am sending copies of this letter to Michael Alexander and to Michael Palliser.

ROBERT ARMSTRONG



889113 PO SW G  
299992 PO TS G  
M45 LONDON T 130/126 27 1133

MARGARET THATCHER 10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1



THERE CAN BE LITTLE DOUBT THAT THE TRAGEDY OF IRELAND IS ENGLANDS  
FAULT. A PARENT WHO IGNORES A CHILD ALLOWING IT TO BE SUBJECT  
TO CONSTANT TRAUMA WILL PRODUCE A DELINQUENT. WHEN THE DELINQUENT  
IN DESPERATION RAISES A HAND TO THE PARENT THE PARENT IN OUTRAGE  
BEATS THE CHILD. THE VICIOUS CIRCLE IS COMPLETE AND GOD HELP ALL  
IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD. IRELAND IS THE CHILD ENGLAND THE STUPID  
CARELESS PARENT. THE DIFFERENCE BEING THAT THE MOTHER TAKES HER  
ACTION IN IGNORANCE AND DESPERATION. ENGLAND SEEMS TO TAKE HERS IN  
IGNORANCE AND CRUELTY. IF SANDS DIES SO WILL MANY OTHERS.  
IF YOU ARE THE KIND OF PERSON WHO WILL BE ABLE TO SLEEP THEREAFTER  
THEN GOD HELP US ALL  
TOM CONTI

COL 10 ~~SWT~~

299992 PO TS G  
889113 PO SW G

*No address*

*As. Rms*

SECRET



Ireland.  
File AH  
cc CO

SUBJECT.

10 DOWNING STREET

✓ cc. Minister etc.

From the Principal Private Secretary

27 April 1981

Dear Roy,

SANDS

Your Secretary of State called upon the Prime Minister this afternoon to report on the Sands case.

He summarised the main developments which had occurred while the Prime Minister had been overseas and in particular described the involvement of the European Commission on Human Rights. He believed that it was only yesterday that the PIRA had fully understood that the British Government was not prepared to change its position. Sands, who was completely under the direction of the PIRA, had reacted to the failure of the Commissioners' visit by accusing Mr Haughey of bad faith and of misleading his family. Mr Haughey would find himself in a dilemma if Sands died: he would have to choose between preserving the new momentum in relations between the United Kingdom and the Republic which had followed the Dublin summit and trying to outbid those extreme republican politicians who would seek to capitalise on Sands's death in the period leading up to the forthcoming Irish election.

Mr Atkins said that Sands was now very close to death. He could no longer keep down water and he was likely to go into a coma very soon. He had given the prison authorities explicit instructions that the doctors were to do nothing to prevent his death. In practice, once he went into a coma, the doctors would ask his family if they wanted them to intervene. If they did, the doctors would revive him once and ask him whether he wanted them to treat him. If he said no, they would do no more and would let him die. Similarly, if his family said that they did not want the doctors to intervene, nothing would be done. If Sands received no medical treatment, the latest forecast was that he would die on Wednesday.

The present security situation was well under control. Last week's rioting had been centred on Londonderry, although there had been lesser outbreaks elsewhere. The security forces had been responding in a very restrained way and had been arresting people after the riots on the basis of photographic evidence. The rioters were now running out of acid for acid bombs and there was evidence that they were turning to blast bombs and military-style hand-grenades. Whereas the security forces had been responding to petrol and acid bombs with plastic bullets, the Chief Constable had made it clear

SECRET

SECRET

- 2 -

that the security forces would shoot anyone seen throwing hand-grenades.

Mr Atkinson continued that if Sands died, there would be an enormous turn out for his funeral. There would be large-scale rioting, and the plans of the security forces for dealing with the situation were already laid. Their primary aim would be to stop Catholic demonstrators invading Protestant areas. There was already a certain amount of evidence that Protestant paramilitary organisations were getting ready to protect Protestant areas against Catholic rioters. If the security forces were unable to prevent intercommunal clashes, serious disturbances were likely to follow. The Chief Constable's present assessment was that provided major intercommunal violence could be prevented, the republican demonstrations would be likely to last two or three days and then die out, to give way to a resumption of the PIRA's campaign which was directed specifically at members of the security forces. Mr Herman believed that it might help to reduce the scale of the trouble, if a small number of people who could normally be expected to be involved in directing the riots were arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and taken out of circulation for a few days. Your Secretary of State said that he proposed to sign the necessary orders for this purpose.

The Prime Minister agreed that this step should be taken. It was likely that Sands's death would lead to a resumption of PIRA terrorism in Great Britain. We also had to look ahead to what would happen as the other hunger strikers moved towards a critical condition.

Your Secretary of State said that the next hunger striker, Hughes, was fourteen days behind Sands and two others a week behind Hughes. One of the latter two was deteriorating rather faster than the others. If Sands died a full assessment of likely developments would immediately be provided for the Prime Minister. His death would make it imperative to change the law to prevent prisoners serving sentences from being elected as Members of Parliament: otherwise the Provisional Sinn Fein would put up one hunger striker after another as candidates.

The Prime Minister said that further work on this problem had now been done and the Home Secretary had told her that morning that it now appeared that the law could be changed relatively easily to make it impossible for prisoners serving sentences of more than a certain specified length to be nominated as candidates in a Parliamentary election.

I am sending a copy of this letter to David Wright (Cabinet Office).

*Yours ever,*

*Harri Whinn.*

Roy Harrington Esq.,  
Northern Ireland Office.

SECRET



10 DOWNING STREET

27 April, 1981

*From the Private Secretary*

The Maze Hunger Strike

I enclose copies of three telegrams from prominent churchmen about the Hunger Strike. The first of these, from Cardinal O'Fiaich, was received at lunchtime today. The other two from the Archbishops of New York and Los Angeles were received over the weekend. As you will see all three messages ask for action in relation to prison dress and prison work.

I should be grateful if you could let me have as soon as possible a draft reply which the Prime Minister might send to Cardinal O'Fiaich. I should be grateful if you could arrange for replies to be sent to Cardinals Cooke and Manning on the Prime Minister's behalf.

I am sending a copy of this letter and its enclosures to Roderic Lyne (Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

M. D. B. ALEXANDER

M W Hopkins, Esq  
Northern Ireland Office

3 Day Clerk.  
1 File

27582 CABOFF G  
925156 DRELA D27.04.81 5  
27582 CABOFF G  
31614 CAPO EI  
CATHOLIC PRESS @ INFORMATION OFFICE DUBLIN  
27 APRIL 1981  
11.36 HRS

TELEGRAM-BY-TELEX

NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
=====

RT. HON. MRS. MARGARET THATCHER, M.P.,  
PRIME MINISTER,  
10 DOWNING STREET.

DEAR PRIME MINISTER,

HAVING APPEALED LAST WEEK TO HUNGER STRIKERS TO END THEIR FAST, I MUST CONTINUE EFFORTS TO SAVE THEIR LIVES. I THEREFORE APPEAL TO YOURSELF AND CABINET TO IMPLEMENT PROPOSALS ON PRISON DRESS AND WORK MADE SEVERAL TIMES LAST YEAR BY BISHOP EDWARD DALY AND MYSELF FOR ALL PRISONERS IN NORTHERN IRELAND. THESE WOULD HAVE AVERTED HUNGER STRIKES AND BROUGHT PRISON PROTESTS TO AN END.

WE DO NOT ASK FOR POLITICAL STATUS, BUT SEEK TO SAVE LIVES BY RECOGNISING UNIQUE SITUATION HERE. WE HAVE A FIVE-FOLD INCREASE IN PRISON POPULATION, OF WHOM A VAST MAJORITY ARE 1) VERY YOUTHFUL, 2) FIRST OFFENDERS, 3) FROM LAW-ABIDING FAMILIES, 4) SENTENCED TO LONG TERMS. TO WEAR THEIR OWN CLOTHES DOES NOT CONFER POLITICAL STATUS. ALL PRISONERS IN SEVERAL COUNTRIES, AND HERE IN ARMAGH WOMENS' PRISON, ARE PERMITTED TO DO SO.

I URGE YOU TO SEND AT ONCE A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE TO TALK TO PRISONERS ON ABOVE BASIS, AS WAS DONE DURING THE LAST HUNGER STRIKE. THIS NOW SEEMS THE ONLY WAY TO AVOID DEATHS IN PRISON AND WIDESPREAD VIOLENCE OUTSIDE.

CARDINAL TOMAS O FIAICH,  
ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH.

+++++

27582 CABOFF GEUFHQQWY CAPO EI  
ZACKNOWLEDED

OK  
31614 CAPO EI

T

R2517

1981 APR 25

02:01

NNNN DF

ZCZC DGL668 1-027494A114

GWLG CO UWNX 067

LOS ANGELES CA 67/66 24 332P PST PAGE01/58

MARGARET THATCHER PRIME MINISTER 10 DOWNING ST  
LONDON

AS THE IRISH-BORN CARDINAL ARCHBISHOP OF LOS ANGELES WITH  
ITS NINE MILLION PEOPLE I EARNESTLY URGE YOU IN THE NAME OF  
ALL CONCERNED WITH HUMAN RIGHTS TO ADOPT THE RECOMMENDATIONS  
OF CARDINAL OFIACH AND BISHOP EDWARD DALY REGARDING PRISON  
DRESS AND PRISON WORK OF THE PRISONERS HELD IN THE PRESENT

COLL 10

1-027494A114 MARGARET PAGE02/8

CRISIS.

CARDINAL TIMOTHY MANNING  
ARCHBISHOP OF LOS ANGELES

COL

WESTERN UNION INTERNATIONAL INC.

INTERNATIONAL INC.

R25/4

889113 PO SW G  
OSE AGRAM LN LFTC  
LFT023 CLF787 LBF536 ELB2698 TCB342 EIE301 ICC802 QID576  
GBLH CO UIAX 093  
TDMT NEW YORK NY 93/91 24 0629P EST



PRIME MINISTER MARGARET THATCHER  
10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1

DEAR PRIME MINISTER THATCHER  
IN MY COMPASSIONATE CONCERN FOR ALL THE PEOPLE IN THE NORTHERN  
IRELAND I JOIN WITH CARDINAL O'FIAICH AND BISHOP DALY IN THE  
URGENT PLE FOR CHNCES IN PRISON REGULATIONS REGARDING CLOTHING AND  
WORK IN ORDER TO END THE HUNGER STRIKE  
I ALSO UNITE WITH THEM IN PRAYER FOR SOLUTIONS THAT WILL ESTABLISH  
JUSTICE AND PEACE AND BRING AN END TO THE TRAGIC VIOLENCE ON THE  
STREETS IN THE NORTH OF IRELAND  
SINCERELY YOURS  
TERENCE CARDINAL COOKE ARCHBISHOP OF NEWYORK

COL 10

OSE AGRAM LN LFTC  
889113 PO SW G

**CONFIDENTIAL**

PRIME MINISTER



Northern Ireland

The NIO have telephoned a further situation report.

The doctors have seen Sands again late this afternoon. His condition continues to deteriorate, but they do not think that tomorrow is likely to be the crisis day.

There was a large but peaceful march in Belfast this afternoon. The NIO estimate that about 16,000 people took part. As they said, there was more trouble at the demonstration in Kilburn this afternoon than there was in Belfast.

There is no sign whatsoever, of any fresh initiative from any quarter.

Nick Sanders

26 April 1981

**CONFIDENTIAL**



CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

Northern Ireland

The NIO report that Bobby Sands' condition continues to deteriorate. The doctors found him lucid this morning, but very tired. He is having difficulty keeping water down, which may lead to kidney problems soon. They think that he is likely to go into a coma very shortly, perhaps tomorrow morning. They cannot be sure of the exact timing, but say that the most probable sequence of events is that he will be found in a coma either tomorrow morning or on Tuesday.

The security situation is fairly quiet, because the bad weather of the last two days has broken the cycle of violence. There may be some sporadic trouble tonight in Belfast and Londonderry, but NIO do not expect it to be as bad as it was in the middle of last week. Tomorrow will probably see the funeral of the fifteen year old boy from Londonderry who was killed by a plastic bullet fired by the security forces. This may well lead to demonstrations in Londonderry, no matter what has happened to Bobby Sands.

The NIO thought earlier today that it was possible that the Papal Nuncio in Dublin might seek to visit Sands in prison, but they say now that this does not seem so likely. They are working on the assumption that any visits from outsiders seeking to mediate would have to be today, given Sands' condition. There are no requests from anyone at the moment. We shall be getting further medical reports later today, and we will pass them on to you.

N J SANDERS  
26 April 1981

CONFIDENTIAL

RR  
SUBJECT

cc. Mastrot set

KW

PRIME MINISTER'S TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
FOR NORTHERN IRELAND ON SATURDAY EVENING, 25 APRIL 1981

---

Prime Minister: Hello, Humphrey.

Secretary of State: Hello, Margaret, welcome home.

Prime Minister: Thank you, but you've had a very difficult time.

Secretary of State: Yes its been all go.

Prime Minister: All go, and during the Recess. Tell me what's the latest, Humphrey? I've seen the two statements. The statement of the Commission and the Northern Ireland Office put out.

Secretary of State: Well the state of play is that the Commission have left. They are still in the Province. They are planning to leave here tomorrow morning because they don't believe there is anything they can now do and I think they will probably go.

Prime Minister: Anything could happen until they go, because obviously people are going to try to get maximum publicity particularly because Sands is going to die.

Secretary of State: That's right. Now I think the form is that they are planning to take the 1030 aeroplane out tomorrow morning. And so anything, as you say, could happen between now and then. And it won't be difficult for people to find out where they are staying, which is in a hotel. Sands is clearly determined. I don't know how much you have heard about the line he is taking which is . . .

Prime Minister: No I haven't.

Secretary of State: Well I think your people can tell you that there is a statement coming out from him, being very cross with the Taoiseach for having misled his sister.

Prime Minister: Oh Nick said that, that certainly some of the people in Northern Ireland were cross with the Taoiseach for having suggested this was a ploy.

/ Secretary of State

Secretary of State: Well it is Sands who is. Now I can give you but I think your people have got, over a different line, the line that is being taken by him which is very very cross with the Taoiseach for having misled Marcella his sister. And there is a good deal of a row going on there. If they haven't got it, we can get it to you quite easily. Well he is cross about that he thinks that he and she has been misled. The truth is that there is a great struggle going on between the Dublin Government on the one hand and the IRA on the other as to the control of all this. But what the outcome of it all is is that he has refused to have anything to do with the complaint lodged by his sister. He was prepared to see the Commissioners informally, provided he could have two people - Gerry Adams and Danny Morrison - with him. To let Gerry Adams into the Maze Prison would have been something that would very seriously have upset a lot of people here. Well we were never actually formally asked to do so. And if we were I would have had to say no. But the Commissioners said look we either act formally on receipt of the complaint or we can't act at all.

Prime Minister: That was very good of them. The thing is that it was the only position they could take up.

Secretary of State: They're absolutely right and they are acting totally properly and it having been established that he would not associate himself with the application made by his sister, then they had no locus at all and so they withdrew. So where we stand now is that anything may happen between now and tomorrow morning. It is probably that nothing will happen that will affect it - probably won't - and we are left then tomorrow with Sands determined to die.

Prime Minister: Yes and he's only got a few days.

Secretary of State: He's only got a few days. The doctors cannot be specific, they are talking of two or three but to be honest with you Margaret they don't really know.

Prime Minister: No because its not a position with which anyone has very much experience. He's taking water presumably.

Secretary of State: He's taking water but he's not finding it very easy to keep down and I think probably it is only a day or two before / he

he starts going into a comma and so forth but he has left the most clear and specific instructions and in writing that he is not to be given any medication or kept alive in any way. So my guess, although it is for the doctors to say and not me is that if he does go into a comma they will leave him alone. Now then there will be a good deal of flurry about all this I'm afraid.

Prime Minister: Well its the troops and the police isn't it?

Secretary of State: Well the troops. Well let me tell you the police and the troops are perfectly content. The troubles that have been reported as happening in Londonderry and Belfast are really quite minor. It will get worse but I have talked to the Chief Constable and the GOC both today and they are quite relaxed and content at the moment.

Prime Minister: Have there been any demonstrations there Humphrey?

Secretary of State: Well not many - well there have been I mean Londonderry there have been hooligans there. There was a little bit in Belfast the night before last, nothing last night because of the snow. But it really is quite minor, it will be much more important as and when he dies but I think a lot of people will recognise that having had the opportunity of making a complaint to the Commission which they could have investigated but having declined even to make it I think the sympathy will not . . .

Prime Minister: No. No its rather countered sympathy hasn't it. I mean the difficulty was going to be that he died as an MP.

Secretary of State: That's right. Well he will still do that. On the other hand he had a chance to make a complaint to the Commission - they were ready to take it up and see what they could do with it and he refused to do so. Now that won't make any difference to his wild supporters but to the more moderate opinions it will make a difference. They will say well this man is not interested in anything other than his own point of view and is willing to die for it.

Prime Minister: But there are two or three other behind him aren't there Humphrey?

/ Secretary of State

Secretary of State: Oh yes. But now that is what we are going to have to direct our attention towards now. Because there are two a fortnight behind him and another one behind that. And one hopes very much that we can prevent the thing going on week after week. I think there is bound to be a weak link later.

Prime Minister: Yes I think they will be getting worried after all if one died and then a second one died then a third one died and nothing happened.

Secretary of State: Yes it doesn't look very attractive.

Prime Minister: No it doesn't.

Secretary of State: That's right. But we will need to assess the situation if he does die shall we say, I don't know, Tuesday, Wednesday, that sort of thing, we'll have to assess it and work out how we handle the next one coming along and how we handle the situation that immediate develops and I'll have time to come and talk to you about it.

Prime Minister: Yes. All right, Humphrey. I'm sorry you have had to spend your Easter Recess in that way. You're at Hillsborough aren't you. Well at least its a pleasant place to be.  
And how's Maggie.

Secretary of State: Fine thank you. And are you exhausted?

Prime Minister: Well no just a bit tired. Goodnight.

PRIME MINISTER

Sands

Clive telephoned with the latest report on Sands.

The European Commissioners had a satisfactory meeting last night with the FCO and NIO. The latter explained our position in general, and in particular the point that we would not want Adams present at the meeting between them and Sands at the Maze. The Commissioners said that they fully accepted this, and explained that it was their normal practice only to see the complainant with the complainant's lawyer. The complainant in this case is in fact Sands' sister, whom the Commissioners - subsequent to the meeting with the FCO/NIO - got in touch with. They agreed with her that she and Sands' lawyer should be present at the meeting at the Maze. This is entirely acceptable to the NIO.

The Commissioners are hoping to reach Belfast at 1030 London time. There is some risk that they will not be able to land because of heavy snow throughout Northern Ireland and the North of England; but the NIO believe they will be able to get in. Incidentally, Sands' sister has complained at the delay in their arrival; but quite apart from the time it took for them to reach London yesterday, it would apparently have been quite impossible for them to have got into Belfast earlier than this morning because of the weather conditions.

The "crunch" is likely to come when they reach Belfast. Sands will then be told that they have arrived and that the meeting will be with the Commissioners, his sister and his lawyer only. Either he will accept this; or he will insist on Adams, and possibly Macfarlane (the local IRA commander) and the PR man of the Sinn Fein being present. Clive says that the NIO position remains that Adams etc. should not be admitted. However, he says that they are extremely worried about the prospect of Sands insisting on the others being present; and even now are showing some signs of wavering. (I told Clive yesterday about your concern at the possibility of their being admitted, and he passed this on to the NIO.)

Willie Whitelaw is in close touch with Humphrey Atkins. If they were to decide to concede to Sands' demand that Adams etc. should be present, I have told Clive that it would be as well for one of them to consult you on the telephone (if possible). However, once we take off we only have  
/ communication

communications through the cockpit, and it will be difficult to have a sensible discussion. So, if there is to be a conversation between you and them, it would have to be before we leave at 3.00 pm. (3.00 pm Qatar time will be 1.00 pm London) If we are in the air, and a decision has to be made, then presumably Willie Whitelaw and Humphrey Atkins will have to take it themselves without consulting you.

I will have to leave the decision  
to H.A & W.W jointly. R  
They will have the latest.

25 April 1981

Richard

ret.

Copy of Statement issued by ECHR Commissioners, Belfast  
Saturday 25 April 1981

Marcella Sands Versus the United Kingdom Government

As stated in the previous press communique of 24 April, the purpose of the visit of the delegation to the Maze Prison was to see Mr. Sands with a view to obtaining his confirmation that he intended to make an application, and if so, to discuss with him the content and handling of the application.

The delegation visited the Maze Prison on 25 April and ascertained through a Solicitor his intentions as regards the above application lodged on his behalf. The delegation established that Mr. Sands did not wish to associate himself with the application.

Nevertheless, Mr. Sands expressed a willingness to see the delegation in the presence of three persons named by him in a statement recently issued in his name. After further consultation, the delegation came to the conclusion that in these circumstances it was not possible to see and confer with Mr. Sands and no meeting took place.



E.R.

The following statement was issued by NIO this evening (probably at about 8.30 pm):

The members of the European Commission on Human Rights who visited the Maze Prison on 25 April in pursuance of a complaint lodged on behalf of Mr. R. Sands against the British Government have issued a statement setting out clearly what took place.

The Government have carried out the undertaking given to facilitate the Commission's examination of any complaint to the Commission about the protest at the Maze Prison.

The Government note that Mr. Sands is not associating himself with the application lodged on his behalf.

25.4.81

OUTLINE OF STATEMENT ALLEGEDLY BROUGHT OUT OF THE MAZE PRISON  
BY MEMBERS OF HUNGER STRIKER BOBBY SANDS' FAMILY:-

"The British Government have the ways and means to concede.  
Until they do, the hunger strike continues.

The Republican political prisoners will not compulsorily  
wear British prison clothes nor compulsorily carry out work  
for the British prison administration. We wish to have  
association with each other in the confines of the Prison.

Four Republican political prisoners are on hunger strike  
on behalf of their 440 comrades here in the H blocks and  
Armagh. Our demands are reasonable and just. We on hunger  
strike are prepared for them."

The statement claimed that the European Commission's  
intervention had been "divisive" and had helped Government  
attempts to confuse the issue.

## FURTHER ALLEGED STATEMENT FROM MAZE PRISON

Sands claimed that the facilities for his three nominees to be present at a meeting with the European Commissioners had been denied. He also said that he had never requested the Commission to investigate the prisoners' demands. He said that the legal requests and submissions to the Commission had been made in good faith by his sister, Marcella, who, he claimed, had been misled by Mr. Haughey into believing that the Commission would deliver on the political prisoners' demands.

He suggested that Mr. Haughey had seen the Commission's intervention as a vehicle for getting the British Government off the hook and he alleged there had been cynical and cold blooded manipulation by Mr. Haughey of people who were clearly vulnerable to this type of pressure.

FOLLOWING FOR THE CABINET OFFICE  
FROM NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE BELFAST  
IMMEDIATE  
SECRET  
252207Z  
NUMBER 427

*WJ*  
This is a copy. The original  
has been extracted  
and retained under  
Section 3(4).

FOLLOWING FOR NUMBER 10  
COPY TO NIO PRIORITY

\*~~~~~\*

THE REPUBLICAN PRESS CENTRE HAD THE FOLLOWING PRESS RELEASE, ALTHOUGH IT PROPORTS TO BE THE WORK OF BOBBY SANDS IT IS UNDOUBTEDLY WRITTEN BY GERRY ADAMS, VICE-PRESIDENT PSF. ON ADAMS INSTRUCTIONS MARCELLA SANDS HAS TOLD THE OFFICE OF THE TAOISEACH THAT SHE WILL BE GOING TO BE DENOUNCING THE CYNICAL INTERVENTION IN THE HUNGER-STRIKE.

QUOTE

THE FOLLOWING PRESS STATEMENT IS CLASSIFIED CONFIDENTIAL

WE HAVE BEEN ASKED TO ISSUE THE FOLLOWING SUPPLIED STATEMENT TO OUR OFFICE FROM BOBBY SANDS M.P. THE STATEMENT WAS GIVEN TO THE SANDS FAMILY IN THE EVENT OF A BREAKDOWN OF THE COMMISSIONS INTERVENTION.  
25.4.81

"I DID'NT REQUEST AT ANY TIME FOR THE COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE THE DEMANDS OF THE PROTESTING PRISONERS IN H BLOCK AND ARMAGH. I DISMISSED THE FIRST SUGGESTION BY JOHN HUME OF THEIR INTERVENTION AS RIDICULOUS. LATER I SAID ON THE 23RD OF APRIL THAT THE CASE IS CUT AND DRIED. THE REPUBLICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS WILL NOT COMPULSORILY WEAR BRITISH PRISON CLOTHING OR COMPULSORILY CARRY OUT WORK FOR THE BRITISH PRISON ADMINISTRATION. WE WISH TO HAVE ASSOICATION WITH EACH OTHER WITHIN THE CONFINES OF THE PRISON. DESPITE THIS AND MY LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN THE COMMISSION I STATED THAT I WAS PREPARED TO MEET ANY EUROPEAN COMMISSIONER PROVIDED ADVISERS CHOSEN BY ME AND A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PROTESTING POLITICAL PRISONERS WAS PRESENT.

THESE FACILITIES WERE DENIED ME. THE LEGAL SUBMISSION AND REQUEST TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION WAS MADE IN GOOD FAITH BY MY SISTER MARCELLA WHO WAS MISLED BY CHARLES HAUGHEY INTO BELIEVING THAT THE COMMISSION WOULD DELIVER ON THE POLITICAL PRISONERS DEMANDS. MR HAUGHEY LED MY FAMILY TO BELIEVE THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WANTED A WAY OUT OF THE DILEMA IN WHICH THEY NOW FIND THEMSELVES AND THAT THE COMMISSIONS INTERVENTION WAS THE VEHICLE FOR GETTING THE BRITISH OFF THE H BLOCOK ARMAGH HOOK.

BECAUSE MR HAUGHEY GAVE SIMILAR ASSURANCE LEADING UP TO THE CONFUSED ENDING OF THE LAST HUNGER STRIKE, BECAUSE MR HAUGHEY HAS IN FACT THE MEANS TO PUT PRESSURE AND TO CALL PUBLICLY ON BRITAIN TO END THE H BLOCK ARMAGH CRISES AND HAS CONSISTENTLY REFUSED TO DO SO I VIEWED HIS PROMPTING OF MY FAMILY AS CYNICAL AND A COLD BLOODED MANIPULATION OF PEOPLE CLEARLY VULNERABLE TO THIS TYPE OF PRESSURE. THE COMMISSIONS INTERVENTION HAS BEEN DIVERSIONARY AND HAS SERVED TO AID THE BRITISH ATTEMPTS TO CONFUSE THE ISSUE.

THE ISSUE IS BASIC AND FUNDAMENTAL.

"FOUR REPUBLICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS ARE ON HUNGER STRIKE ON BEHALF OF THEIR 440 PROTESTING COMRADES HERE IN THE H BLOCKS AND ARMAGH. OUR DEMANDS ARE REASONABLE AND JUST. WE ON HUNGER STRIKE ARE PREPARED TO DIE FOR THEM. ONE OF MY COMRADES, FRANKIE HUGHES, IS IN A STEADILY DETERIORATING CONDITION. I AM ON THE 56TH DAY OF HUNGER STRIKE. PATSY O'HARA AND RAYMOND MCCREESH ARE ON THE 35TH DAY OF HUNGER STRIKE.

"NOW THAT THE COMMISSION DISCUSSION IS OUT OF THE WAY AND THE CONFUSION DELIBERATELY CREATED BY ITS INTERVENTION HAS CLEARED, WE THE POLITICAL PRISONERS CALL ONCE AGAIN FOR THE PEOPLE TO SUPPORT OUR DEMANDS.

"THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS THE WAYS AND MEANS TO CONCEDE THEM. "UNTIL THEY DO THE HUNGER STRIKE CONTINUES.

-SIGNED, BOBBY SANDS, PRISON HOSPITAL, H BLOCKS, LONG KESH".

\*~\* name  
deleted and  
retained under  
Section 3(4)

Wayland

13 October 2011

IMMEDIATE

NORTHERN IRELAND: ADVANCE COPIES

28 17x

TIME FACTOR  
ADVANCE COPY

PS N IRELAND OFFICE - PS TO SEC OF STATE  
PS/LPS RM 65 A/2 GGS  
PS/PUS N IRELAND OFFICE [4 copies]  
MR BULLARD  
MR FERGUSSON SIR K STOWE  
HD/RJD MR MORIATY  
HD/PUSD (2) MR MARSHALL  
HD/TPD MR BUXTON  
HD/NEWS DEPT CABINET OFFICE -- SIR R ARMSTRONG  
DIO

NO 10 DOWNING STREET

CONFIDENTIAL

FROM DUBLIN 261311Z APRIL 1981.  
TO PRIORITY F C O  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 125 OF 25 APRIL.  
AND TO ROUTINE N I O (B)

1. DR GARRET FITZGERALD ASKED ME TO CALL YESTERDAY TO DISCUSS THE SANDS CASE. I NEED NOT RECORD THIS PART OF OUR TALK WHICH WAS IN GENERAL TERMS. BUT I SHOULD REPORT THAT HE SAID THAT HE AND OTHERS WERE VERY CONCERNED ABOUT THE NEWS OF THE FORMATION OF THE ULSTER ARMY COUNCIL. HE WONDERED HOW WHAT MUST BE AN ILLEGAL ORGANISATION COULD BE ALLOWED TO FORM ITSELF.

2. I HAVE SO FAR NOT RECEIVED REPRESENTATIONS ABOUT IT FROM IRISH MINISTERS OR OFFICIALS BUT IN VIEW OF THE REPORTS IN TODAY'S PRESS I SHOULD NOT BE SURPRISED IF I AM ASKED ABOUT IT ON MONDAY. I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR GUIDANCE.

FIGG.

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

*This is a copy. The original  
has been extracted and  
closed 6/6/80 years*



CONFIDENTIAL

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,  
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

25 April 1981

Michael Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1

*M.*

*Dear Michael,*

NORTHERN IRELAND : THE HUNGER STRIKE AND LAW AND ORDER

1. Sands is now in the 60th day of his hunger strike, and is in imminent danger of death. There was a slight, unexplained, improvement in his condition yesterday, but the doctors' present assessment is that he cannot live much longer unless he accepts treatment. There is every indication that Sands is reconciled to dying if he cannot force us to concede. Of the other three hunger strikers, Hughes is reckoned by the doctors to be about one week behind Sands.
2. Since his election, Sands has attracted a following in Northern Ireland, and in the last 10 days his hunger strike has been accompanied by more frequent demonstrations, last Sunday's demonstration in Belfast being particularly large (15,000). There has been frequent rioting by hooligans, sometimes drawn from the ranks of those who attend demonstrations, but the scale of the disorder has been both exaggerated by the press and to some degree encouraged by the press. Despite the frequency of television and newspaper reports of stone-throwing incidents and high-jacked vehicles, the disorder has not been widespread, has rarely involved more than 100 youths at a time, and has invariably lasted for only a few hours. There has been no repeat of the large scale rioting, or the sectarian confrontations that developed in 1969 and 1970.
3. As I think you know, the security situation remains better this year than it was last year. Both the capacity of the terrorists, and the number of terrorist crimes, have continued to decrease. The number of deaths, explosions and shooting incidents are all well down this year compared with last - but the influence of the hunger strike is shown in the fact that 13 of the 24 deaths this year have occurred since the beginning of the hunger strike - seven of them (including three rioters) during the last fortnight. The police have behaved admirably, and, closely supported by the Army, have succeeded in controlling not only outbreaks of disorder, but also terrorist activity, with a minimum of irritation to the community at large.

...../2

CONFIDENTIAL

4. There have been persistent political pressures on the Government, on the one side seeking a way to get Sands off his hunger strike (which we know can only be achieved by making unacceptable concessions) and increasingly from the Protestant side urging us to stand firm in the face of what they see as orchestrated Republican pressure. Throughout all these pressures our stance has been simple and consistent: we will not concede political status or negotiate a separate regime for protesting prisoners: we are determined to administer a fair and humane prison regime; and we are determined to uphold and enforce the law against all who challenge or break it.
5. Particular attention has focussed on the intervention of three members of the Irish Dail, the involvement of the European Commission on Human Rights, and the current visit of the Pope's Private Secretary, Father Magee. The three Irish politicians were admitted to the Maze because Sands had asked to see them; one of them used the occasion to press Sands to abandon his hunger strike. Despite loyalist claims that the visit was part of a plot, we would have found it far more difficult to defend a refusal to let these three see him. The European Commission on Human Rights became involved when Sands' sister lodged a complaint with the Commission on his behalf, after a meeting between members of the family and the Prime Minister of the Irish Republic. We have consistently made it plain that we will facilitate the European Commission in their duties and they therefore visited the Maze in order to speak to Sands: he refused to see them unless Gerald Adams \* and Daniel Morrison (Editor of the Provisionals' newspaper 'An Phoblacht') accompanied him. There were some accusations that the Government thwarted the ECHR mission by refusal to allow Adams and Morrison into the prison, but the Provisionals have concentrated their attack on Mr Haughey who is said to have misled Sands' sister in the belief that the Commission "would deliver on the political prisoners' demands". It is now widely accepted that, once Sands had refused to confirm that he wished to take up the complaint, the ECHR had no further locus.

Father Magee is currently in Northern Ireland and my Secretary of State will report separately to Cabinet on any points of importance.

As you know the 400 protesting (non-hunger-striking) prisoners asked for furniture to be put in their cells some two weeks ago. The supply of beds and bedding has been deliberately spun out, and will be completed today. Other items of furniture will begin to be supplied next week. Some prisoners, anxious to get what comforts they can, have asked for the books and newspapers to which they are entitled, and are being given them.

Although some last minute change of course cannot be ruled out, the probability is that Sands will die very soon. We can expect determined trouble, but my Secretary of State, after consulting the Chief Constable and the General Officer Commanding, is satisfied that police and Army resources should be adequate to the task ahead, and that proper plans are being laid for dealing with the threat.

67

\*~\* Passage deleted and closed, 40 years,  
under a FOI Exemption.

Wayland,

13 October 2011

CONFIDENTIAL

...../3

CONFIDENTIAL

- 3 -

If Sands does die, there may be some pressure for a further by-election. My Secretary of State is clear that we must resist that, at least until the electoral law has been changed, to prevent convicted prisoners being MPs. As you will know, H Committee will tomorrow be considering proposals to that end drawn up by the Home Secretary.

I am sending a copy of this letter to all Private Secretaries to Members of Cabinet and to David Wright (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely  
Mike Hepburn's

M W HOPKINS

PS I am enclosing (for the information of the Prime Minister, Home Secretary, Lord Chancellor, Defence Secretary, Foreign Secretary, Lord Privy Seal and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster) an intelligence assessment - agreed with the police and army - of the situation we shall face in the event of Sands' death

MW

CONFIDENTIAL



MONTHLY INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT (1 to 29 April 1981)SECTION A: MAIN FEATURES AND OUTLOOK

1. The period has been dominated by the campaign in support of the hunger-strikers at HMP Maze and the election of Robert SANDS in the Fermanagh and South Tyrone by-election on 9 April.
2. Towards the end of the period the pace of terrorist activity, particularly INLA, appeared to quicken with a number of effective attacks. In all four members of the security forces and two civilians were murdered.

Outlook

3. SANDS' death is imminent. The Provisional leadership, in contrast to their position before Christmas, seems still to be keener on achieving political status for the prisoners than saving SANDS' life partly because they have been confident (particularly since his election) that HMG would eventually succumb. They have totally misread the situation throughout. Their tactics have been determined on a day-to-day basis to take advantage of opportunities as they offer and it is unlikely that they have any clear policy on what to do next. Even with SANDS dead there will still be three prisoners on hunger-strike and it could be that the PSF/H Block Committee will continue to concentrate their efforts on bringing political pressure to bear on HMG, eg through large, peaceful demonstrations.
4. However a violent scenario seems unavoidable. There has been a good deal of intelligence in recent days of preparations by both Catholic and Protestant communities for severe civil disorder: and activity on both sides is provocative with a poster-war and plans for shows of strength. Rioting in Republican areas on SANDS' death is inevitable and, with the prospect of attempts to erect barricades and no-go areas, likely to lead to confrontation with the security forces. Whether or not the Provisionals seek to provoke such disturbances - there will be no need for them to do so - they will undoubtedly take advantage of them, hoping to present themselves as protectors of the Catholic community. However, there

is still little evidence, despite the Fermanagh vote, that Catholics on the whole have any sympathy for SANDS or the demand for political status. The PSF came badly out of the ECHR visit and have been widely criticised for their obduracy. Much will depend on security forces success in controlling events in the early days; and on what the Loyalist paramilitaries do.

5. There are also undoubtedly plans well advanced for terrorist activity. Decisions on whether and when to put them in practice are probably still to be taken. The leadership, whatever their preference, will undoubtedly come under pressure to give the go-ahead. Explosives (probably for use in car bombs) are available in the Province, a number of radio-controlled devices have been supplied, and there is an adequate supply of weapons, not necessarily modern, but suitable for the kind of "defensive" activity principally envisaged at this stage. The Belfast capability, with the presence there of Robert STOREY (recently acquitted at the Old Bailey), Martin LYNCH (recovered from a wound) and Tommy GORMAN (recently released from the Maze) is greater than for some time. But the pre-emptive arrest in recent days of a large number of active terrorists will temporarily have disrupted Provisional plans and made co-ordination more difficult for them. Though there is no recent specific intelligence it must be assumed that PIRA will also want to mount activity on the mainland.

6. INLA continue with their targetting and, as their recent shootings and booby trap bombings have shown, are capable of effective action, though on a limited scale. INLA are also keen to foment disorder in support of the hunger-strikers.

7. On the Loyalist side, Andy TYRIE (UDA leader) has clearly decided the moment has come to assert himself. Although by extremist standards he has been acting responsibly, for example ruling against confrontation with the security forces, he was behind the re-activation of the Ulster Army Council (likely to be the vehicle principally for UDA/UVF para-military co-operation) and is keeping firm tabs on the Ulster Workers Council. TYRIE certainly sees himself as the key figure. And while relations between him and PAISLEY remain distant, their objectives are essentially the same and the test, if

it comes, will find them together for as long as their interests coincide.

8. PAISLEY's own plans remain obscure. There were rumours of another spectacular but he may decide that things are running sufficiently his way at the moment for him to bide his time. The latest intelligence suggests that this will not come until after the election.

16 be  
Communique <sup>16 be</sup> issued by the Secretary to the European Commission of Human Rights (Rule 17 (3) of the Commission's rules of procedure) at 1 pm on time.

Mr Robert Sands v the UK Application No. 9338/81

1. The European Commission of Human Rights was on 23 April 1981 seized by an application introduced under Article 25 of the European Convention on Human Rights against the Government of the United Kingdom by Ms Marcella Sands on behalf of her brother, Mr Robert Sands MP, at present on hunger strike at the Maze Prison where he is serving a sentence of imprisonment.

2. The application complains under Article 2 (Right to Life), Article 3 (Prohibition of Inhuman Treatment) and Article 10 of the Convention (Freedom of Expression) about his conditions of detention.

3. In view of the urgency of the situation the <sup>Acting</sup> President of the Commission (Mr Norgaard) has informed the UK Government of the introduction of the application and has indicated to the Government under Rule 36 of the Rules of Procedure that the necessary steps should be taken to enable a delegation from the Commission to meet Mr Sands in prison with a view to obtaining his confirmation that he intends to make an application and if so discussing the contents and the handling of the application.

4. The delegation, which is on its way to the UK, consists of the Acting President, Mr Carl - Aage Norgaard (Dane) and Mr Torkel Opsahl (Norwegian). They will be accompanied by the Secretary to the Commission and another member of the Secretariat.



WITH  
THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE  
PERMANENT SECRETARY

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
GREAT GEORGE STREET  
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

<sup>F+10</sup>  
Line for News Dept agreed with N10 (Mr Marshall)  
12.30 pm 24/4/81

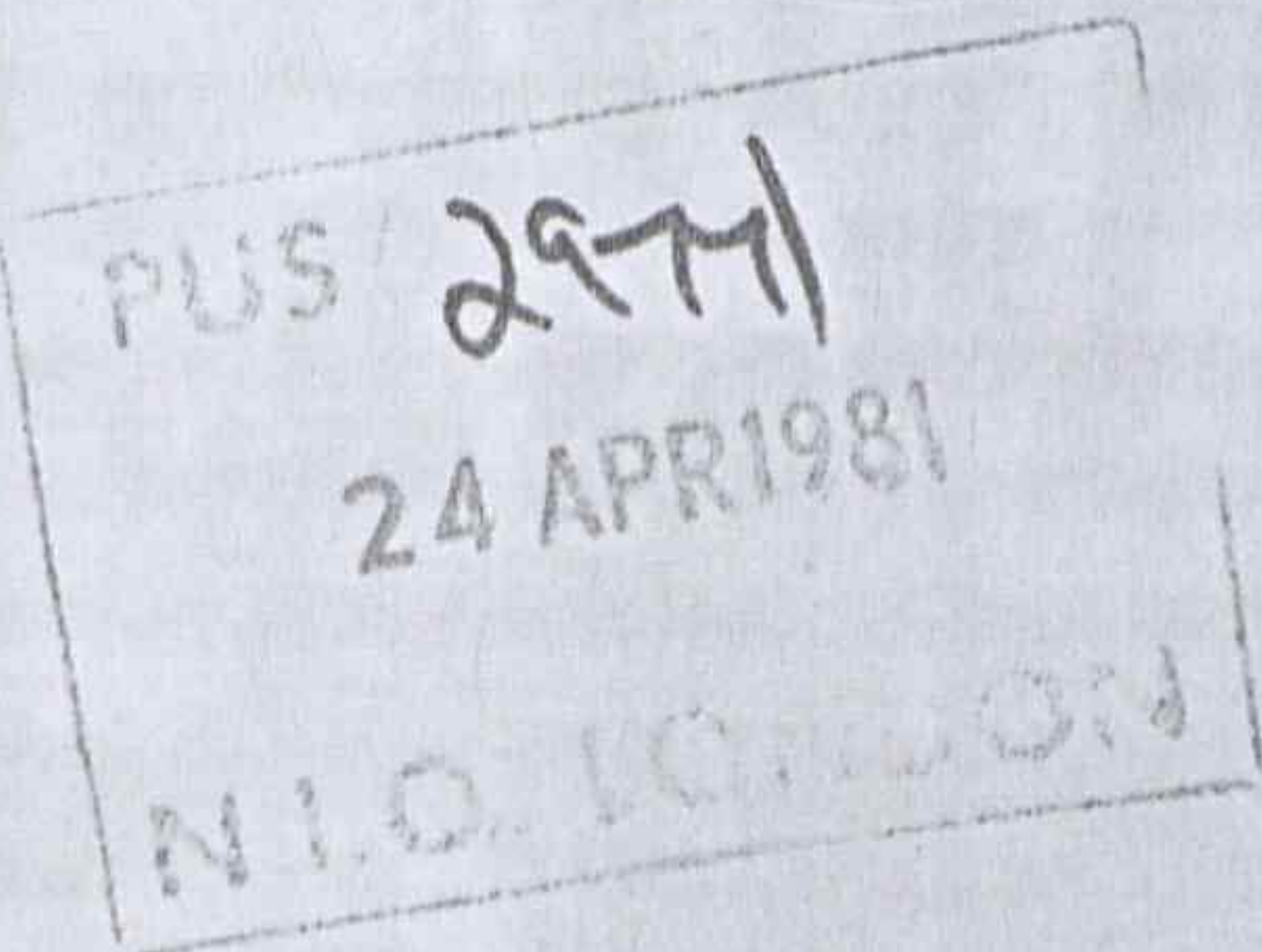
The Government received, late this morning, a communication from the European Commission of Human Rights informing them that Ms Marcella Sands has introduced, on behalf of her brother Mr Robert Sands, an application with the Commission pursuant to the relevant provisions of the European Convention of Human Rights. The Government has been requested to take the necessary steps to enable a delegation of the Commission to meet the applicant in prison with a view to obtaining his confirmation that he intends to make the application and further details concerning his complaints. The Government is giving urgent and sympathetic consideration to this request from the Commission.

DUS/L/323

DESK BY 1 PM PLEASE

RESTRICTED

PS/PUS



cc PS/S of S (L&B) M  
PS/Mr Alison (L&B) M  
Mr Blelloch M  
Mr Ranson M  
Mr Wyatt M  
Mr Burns M  
Mr Moriarty  
Mr Abbott

BOBBY SANDS AND ECHR

I attach a copy of a telex message received by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office from Mr Raymond, Deputy Secretary of the ECHR. The telex rehearses the full text of the application made by Marcella Sands and also constitutes a request to HMG "to take the necessary steps to enable a delegation from the Commission" to meet Sands in prison "with a view to obtaining his confirmation that he intends to make an application, and further details concerning his complaint". I have agreed with the FCO that no immediate reply will be sent, but that we should aim to send a reply later today. We are trying to arrange to see the two Commissioners in London this afternoon.

In the meantime the ECHR in Strasbourg will in the next hour be putting out a press statement indicating that they have received this application and that they have requested HMG to facilitate the visit to Mr Sands. The press line I have agreed for the FCO press office is that HMG has only just received this request and is giving it urgent and sympathetic consideration.

*J. Burns*  
pp J A MARSHALL  
24 April 1981

RESTRICTED

TEL 3203 OF 24.4.1981

FOR MR. D. M. EDWARDS  
ROOM W.44/1  
FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE  
LONDON

FROM MR. J. RAYMOND

APPLICATION NO. 9338/81, ROBERT SANDS V. THE UNITED KINGDOM

---

SIR,

I HAVE THE HONOUR TO INFORM YOU THAT MS. MARCELLA SANDS INTRODUCED ON BEHALF OF HER BROTHER, MR. ROBERT SANDS, MP, THE ABOVE APPLICATION WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 25 OF THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS ON 23 APRIL 1981. THE APPLICATION WAS REGISTERED ON THE SAME DAY.

THE TEXT OF THE APPLICATION AS RECEIVED BY TELEX AT 23.23 HOURS, IS AS FOLLOWS :

ON BEHALF OF MY BROTHER, ROBERT SANDS, MP, I WISH TO APPLY TO THE COMMISSION UNDER ARTICLE 25 OF THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS. MY BROTHER IS A VICTIM OF A VIOLATION OF THE CONVENTION BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT. HIS STATE OF HEALTH IS SUCH THAT HE IS UNABLE HIMSELF TO MAKE AN APPLICATION DIRECTLY.

THE GROUNDS FOR MY CLAIM FOR INTERVENTION BY THE COMMISSION ARE :

1) THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS IN BREACH OF ARTICLES 2 AND 3 OF THE CONVENTION. MY BROTHER'S LIFE IS IN DANGER. HE IS NOW IN THE 54TH DAY OF A HUNGER STRIKE WHICH HE HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO UNDERTAKE AS A MORE CONVENTIONAL DOMESTIC REMEDY WAS NOT OPEN TO HIM TO PROTEST AGAINST PRISON CONDITIONS WHICH HE REGARDED AS INTOLERABLE.

NO DOMESTIC REMEDIES ARE AVAILABLE TO HIM TO HAVE HIS PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES DECLARED INHUMAN OR DEGRADING. THERE IS NO FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS CHARTER JUSTICIABLE IN NORTHERN IRELAND ON



NO DOMESTIC REMEDIES ARE AVAILABLE TO HIM TO HAVE HIS PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES DECLARED INHUMAN OR DEGRADING. THERE IS NO FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS CHARTER JUSTICIABLE IN NORTHERN IRELAND ON WHICH HE CAN RELY.

2) THE CONDITIONS OF MY BROTHER'S IMPRISONMENT ARE IN BREACH OF ARTICLE 10 IN THAT HE IS UNABLE TO GIVE EXPRESSION TO THE OPINIONS OF HIS CONSTITUENTS, DESPITE THE FACT THAT HE IS A DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED MEMBER OF THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT.

3) IN THE PARTIAL DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS ON APPLICATION NO. 8317/78 BY T. MCFEELEY ET AL AGAINST THE UNITED KINGDOM THE COMMISSION AT PARAGRAPH 64 EXPRESSED ITS CONCERN AT THE INFLEXIBLE APPROACH OF THE STATE AUTHORITIES "WHICH HAS BEEN CONCERNED MORE TO PUNISH OFFENDERS AGAINST PRISON DISCIPLINE THAN TO EXPLORE WAYS OF RESOLVING SERIOUS DEADLOCKS" IN THE NORTHERN IRELAND PRISON SYSTEM. THIS INFLEXIBILITY CONTINUES.

MY BROTHER IS THE VICTIM OF A CONTINUING DENIAL OF HIS RIGHTS. BECAUSE OF THE URGENCY OF THIS SITUATION IT IS NOT POSSIBLE IN THIS TELEX TO EXPAND UPON THE LEGAL BASIS OF THIS APPLICATION AND TO RELY ON, AND DISTINGUISH WHERE APPROPRIATE, OTHER RELEVANT CASES BEFORE THE COMMISSION.

I AM MAKING THIS PLEA FOR THE COMMISSION TO TAKE NOTE OF DEVELOPMENTS FOLLOWING THE DECISION TO WHICH I HAVE REFERRED AND I WOULD ASK THEM TO EXAMINE URGENTLY, ON A FORMAL OR INFORMAL BASIS, THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE MEASURES TAKEN BY THE RELEVANT AUTHORITIES SINCE THE PARTIAL DECISION WAS INITIATED CONSTITUTES AN ADEQUATE RESPONSE TO THE COMMISSION'S COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS AND TO OTHER BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS REQUIREMENTS WHICH I WILL UPON IF I AM AFFORDED THE OPPORTUNITY.

IN PARTICULAR, I WOULD REFER TO RULE 41 OF THE COMMISSION'S RULES OF PROCEDURE AND WOULD ASK THAT A SPECIFIC ON-THE-SPOT INVESTIGATION BE UNDERTAKEN IMMEDIATELY UNDER THAT OR ANY OTHER APPROPRIATE RULE.

MARCELLA SANDS

MARCELLA SANDS  
11 LABURNUM WAY  
TWINBROOK  
BELFAST BT 70  
NORTHERN IRELAND

TELEPHONE: (BELFAST) 613 675.11

I SHOULD FURTHER INFORM YOU THAT THE ACTING PRESIDENT OF THE COMMISSION, MR. NORGAARD, HAS UNDER RULE 36 OF THE COMMISSION'S RULES OF PROCEDURE, DECIDED THAT YOUR GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE REQUESTED TO TAKE THE NECESSARY STEPS TO ENABLE A DELEGATION FROM THE COMMISSION, CONSISTING OF MM. NORGAARD AND OPSAHL AND ASSISTED BY THE COMMISSION'S SECRETARY, MR. KRUGER, TO MEET THE APPLICANT IN PRISON WITH A VIEW TO OBTAINING HIS CONFIRMATION THAT HE INTENDS TO MAKE THE APPLICATION, AND FURTHER DETAILS CONCERNING HIS COMPLAINTS.

I SHOULD ACCORDINGLY BE GRATEFUL IF YOU WOULD INFORM ME AT YOUR EARLIEST CONVENIENCE OF THE MEASURES TAKEN BY YOUR GOVERNMENT IN ORDER TO ENABLE THE COMMISSION'S DELEGATION TO ACCOMPLISH THEIR VISIT.

I HAVE THE HONOUR TO BE, SIR, YOUR OBEDIENT SERVANT,

JEAN RAYMOND,  
DEPUTY SECRETARY TO THE  
EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
OF HUMAN RIGHTS

+++

24961 PRDRME G  
EUROPA A STRBGO

File No. ....

Department .....

Drafted by  
(Block Capitals) .....

Tel. Extn. ....

OUTWARD

TELEGRAM

Security Classification
CONFIDENTIAL
Precedence
<del>XX</del> FLASH
DESKBY .....Z

FOR  
COMMS. DEPT.  
USE

Despatched (Date) .....  
(Time) .....Z

POSTBY .....Z

PREAMBLE

(Time of Origin) ..... 240500 ..... Z (G.M.T.)

(Security Class.) ..... CONFIDENTIAL

(Codeword) .....

(Restrictive Prefix) .....

(Caveat/  
Privacy marking) .....

(Deskby) ..... Z

TO ..... FLASH ..... FCO .....  
(precedence) ..... (post)

Tel. No. 1 of 27/4

AND TO (precedence/post) ..... ~~XXXX~~ DUBLIN (DESK BY 24 0930Z)

AND SAVING TO .....

REPEATED TO (for info) .....

SAVING TO (for info) .....

Distribution:-

[TEXT]

Following for Whitmore 10 Downing Street, from Alexander.

Your tels 7 and 8: Maze Hunger Strike.

The Prime Minister is generally content with the course of action recommended by Mr. Whitelaw and Mr. Atkins. However, she considers that the second sentence of paragraph III of the instructions to Mr. Figg is inconsistent with the second paragraph of your first telegram under reference. She would prefer the sentence to be redrafted as follows:-

"We would not oppose an intervention by the European Commission for Human Rights provided that the Commission's involvement is brought about in the only way ....." (Continue as drafted.)

Copies to:-

CONFIDENTIAL

FM SALALAH 240500Z APR 81

TO FLASH F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1 OF 24 APRIL

AND TO IMMEDIATE DUBLIN (DESKBY 240930Z).

FOLLOWING FOR WHITMORE 10 DOWNING STREET, FROM ALEXANDER.  
YOUR TELS 7 AND 8 : MAZE HUNGER STRIKE.

THE PRIME MINISTER IS GENERALLY CONTENT WITH THE COURSE OF ACTION  
RECOMMENDED BY MR WHITELAW AND MR ATKINS. HOWEVER, SHE CONSIDERS  
THAT THE SECOND SENTENCE OF PARAGRAPH III OF THE INSTRUCTIONS TO  
MR FIGG IS INCONSISTENT WITH THE SECOND PARAGRAPH OF YOUR FIRST  
TELEGRAM UNDER REFERENCE. SHE WOULD PREFER THE SENTENCE TO BE  
RE-DRAFTED AS FOLLOWS :-

QUOTE.

WE WOULD NOT OPPOSE AN INTERVENTION BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR  
HUMAN RIGHTS PROVIDED THAT THE COMMISSION'S INVOLVEMENT IS BROUGHT  
ABOUT IN THE ONLY WAY .....

UNQUOTE (CONTINUE AS DRAFTED).

FCO PLEASE PASS DUBLIN.

NNNN

CF

24 April, 1981

Here is another telegram about Bobby  
Sands, which we shall not acknowledge.

N. J. SANDERS

M Hopkins, Esq  
Northern Ireland Office

RH

NNNN  
889113 PO SW G  
SM TRC TELEGRAM G

231904  
ZCZC TXE0017 LBP389 ELB1359 PLB535 ZYM177 YCA270  
GBXX CO FRXX 074  
PARIS 74/72 23 1838 PAGE 1/50



MADAME THATCHER PREMIER MINISTRE 10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDRESSW1

BOBBY SANDS QUI FAIT LA GREVE DA LA FAIM DEPUIS 54 JOURS  
RISQUE MAINTENANT DE MOURIR D UN MOMENT A L AUTRE.  
AU NOM DU PARTI SOCIALISTE FRANCAIS, JE VOUS DEMANDE DE  
METTRE EN OEUVRE LES MESURES APPROPRIEES POUR QU UN DRAME

COL 10 54 FRANCAIS

YCA270 PAGE 02/22

PUISSE ETRE  
EVITE ET QUE LE STATUT POLITIQUE SOIT RECONNU A CES PRISONNIERS  
IRLANDAIS. LIONEL JOSPIN PREMIER SECRETAIRE DU PARTI  
SOCIALISTE FRANCAIS.

NNNN  
889113 PO SW G  
SM TRC TELEGRAM G

JS

Tr  
i

24 April 1981

I enclose for your information two telegrams we have received about the hunger strike. We do not propose to acknowledge them.

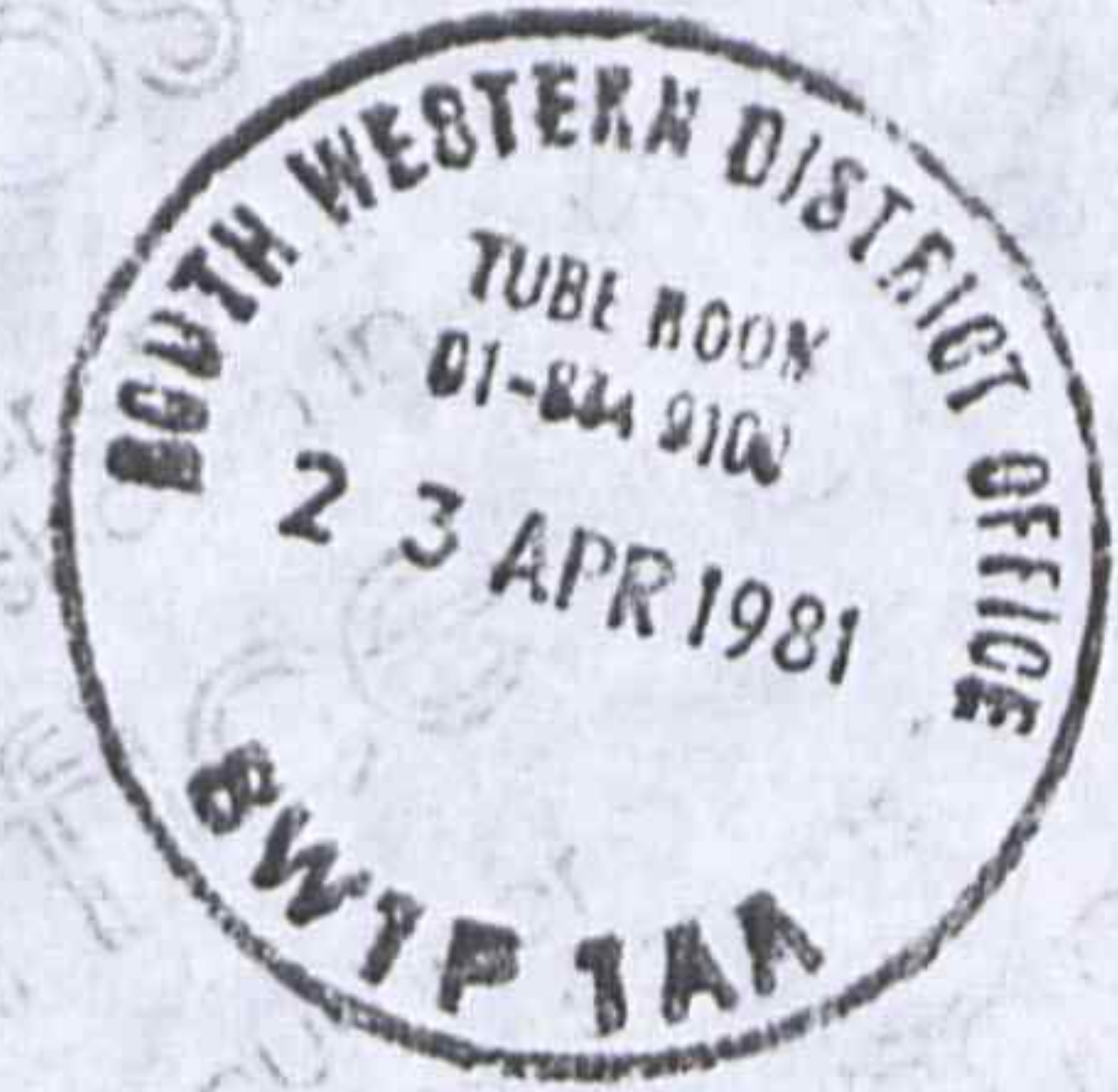
NJS

M.W. Hopkins, Esq.,  
Northern Ireland Office.

4

R 23/4

889113 PO SW G  
299992 PO TS G  
A91 UK081 NFL729 TCOO 0FA004 4-000531S113  
GFLE HL UFNX 022  
SANTA CRUZ CA 021/023 04-23 1232A EST



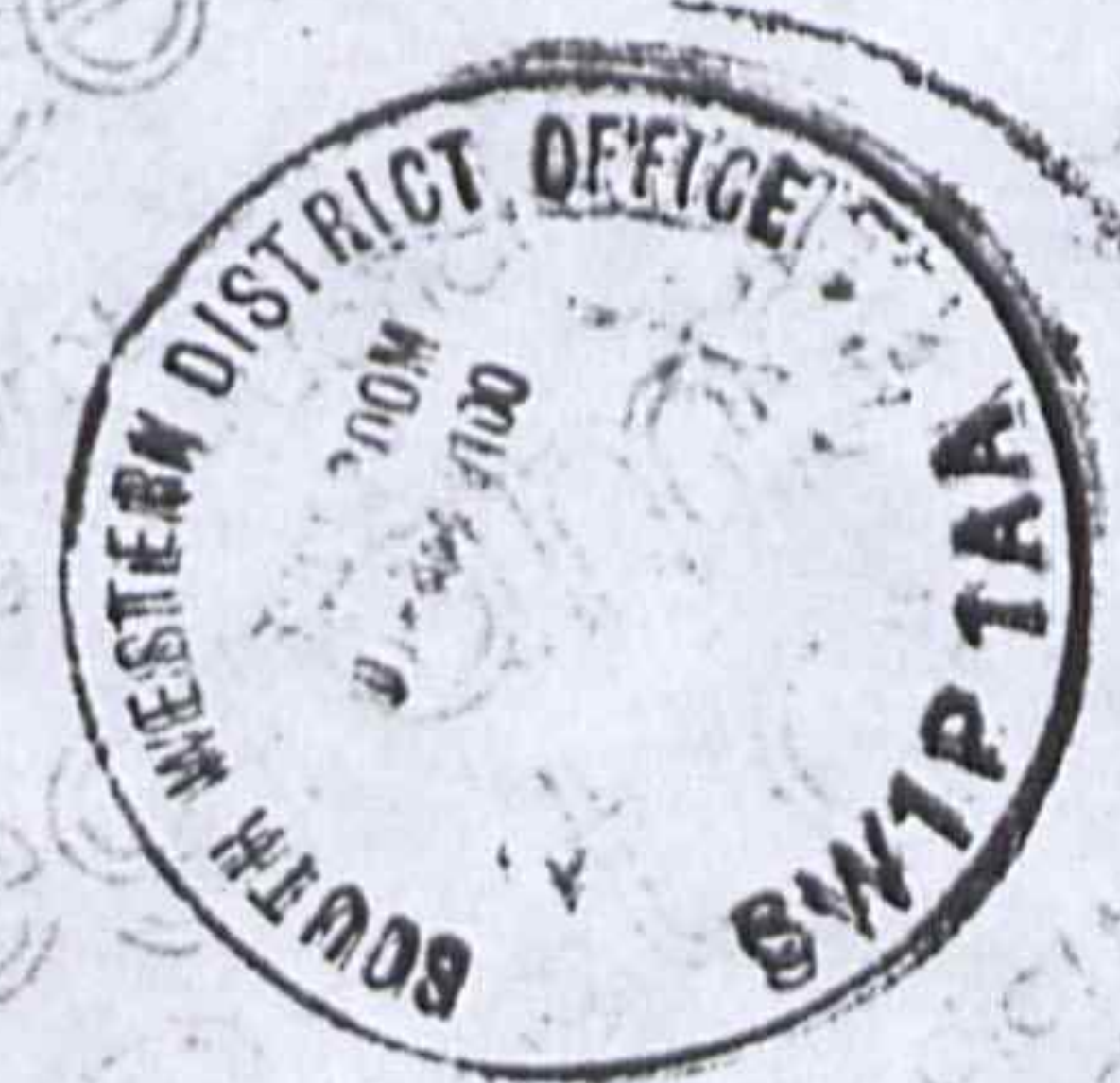
LT  
MARGARET THATCHER 10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON (UNITED KINGDOM)

DEAR MRS THATCHER, SAVE BOBBY SANDS, GRANT POLITICAL STATUS,  
WITHDRAW THE ARMY.  
ERIN CLARK

COL 10

299992 PO TS G  
889113 PO SW G

R 23/4



889113 PO SW G  
299992 PO TS G  
M93 DN539 2.52 DUELIN T S/RISK 43/40

MARGARET THATCHER PRIME MINISTER  
10 DOWNING ST  
LONDON

THE NATIONAL H BLOCK ARMAGH COMMITTEE DEMANDS THAT YOUR GOVERNMENT  
IMMEDIATELY CONCEDE THE FIVE DEMANDS OF THE H BLOCK HUNGER STRIKERS  
BEFORE DEATH AND THE CONSEQUENTIAL EVENTS OVERCOME YOUR INTRANSIGENT  
POLICY STOP

COL 10

299992 PO TS G  
889113 PO SW G



ER

Passed to  
CMB

PM does not like redraft  
at x below. Either  
stick with her draft or  
use redraft at y below.

PRIME MINISTER

Letter to Irish MPs

T.

Our Ambassador in Dublin has advised in fairly strong terms that the three Irish MPs are likely to react fairly strongly and in public to the letter as redrafted by us. He has suggested that, if the final sentence is redrafted, the whole thing should die away. The suggested redraft is as follows:-

X

"Everyone must wish to see an end to it, and that the hunger strikers can be persuaded to desist from their present course."

Clive has warned the Embassy that you may wish to stick to the previous version. What do you think?

23 April, 1981.

Y

It is for them to  
~~act~~ desist from their  
present course. I  
hope they will do so.

NOTE OF A MEETING HELD ON 23 APRIL 1981

NORTHERN IRELAND: HUNGER STRIKE IN THE MAZE PRISON AND  
THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Present: Home Secretary  
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland  
Sir Kenneth Stowe (NIO)  
Mr. Blelloch (NIO)  
Mr. Fifoot (FCO)  
Mr. Whitmore (No.10)  
Mr. Boys Smith

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland referred to Mr. Haughey's conversation with the British Ambassador in Dublin, reported in Dublin telegram No. 116 of 22 April. Mr. Haughey seemed ready to be helpful and had suggested that progress could be built on the involvement of representatives of the European Commission on Human Rights. The Government had considered and rejected the possibility of facilitating the informal involvement of the ECHR. The ECHR could claim a formal locus only if it received a complaint. None had so far been made. The ECHR could act speedily if it received a complaint and could ask that nothing should be done to prejudice an investigation for which it would seek the Government's co-operation. The Government should be ready in these circumstances to facilitate an investigation. Although it would be helpful if there was an investigation prompted in this way, it was important that the Government was not seen to be party to engineering a complaint.

2. The following points were noted in discussion about the ECHR and the complaints procedure:

- (i) a complaint could be accepted by the ECHR only if it clearly came from an aggrieved person or somebody acting on his behalf, such as a lawyer or member of his family. It could not properly be made by an organisation or party seeking to act in his interests. A complaint could be submitted by telegram and did not in the first instance have to be accompanied by formal or extensive documentation;
- (ii) the ECHR could not receive and investigate a complaint on a matter which it had already determined. Thus a complaint about general conditions in the H blocks would not be admissible;
- (iii) a complaint might possibly be formulated along the lines that the treatment the hunger strikers were receiving by its restrictive nature was degrading and interfered with their right to privacy. Such a formula might provide the basis on which to found a complaint but there was a risk that it would be seen as contrived and so perhaps as something to which the Government was some way party;

- (iv) there was not judged to be a great risk that the Government would be seen to have engineered a complaint. For some weeks it had been put about that the ECHR should be involved only if it received a complaint and took its own initiative to act upon it. This was thought to be understood by those concerned with the welfare of the hunger strikers and, for example, by Mr. Hume. The Government's tactic was judged likely to help generate a complaint and not to stop one being made. There had been reference to consultation between the Government and the ECHR in order to establish that a complaint would be needed before there could be an investigation, but there was no suggestion that consultation had gone further;
- (v) if the ECHR sought to investigate a complaint the Government could make it known that it was co-operating with the Commission to ascertain the circumstances giving rise to the complaint. This approach would make it less likely that the Government's policies alone would be seen to be under investigation;
- (vi) the Home Secretary judged that it would be helpful if the ECHR was represented by at least two people in any investigation. This would lessen the risk of its becoming involved in an attempt at mediation. It was noted that the ECHR had two people available.

3. The following further points were noted.

- (a) Sands would be moved to an outside hospital only if he gave up his hunger strike, if he asked for treatment, or if his medical needs could not be met in the prison hospital. It was likely that the prison hospital would be able to provide the necessary standard of care. He was not yet medically beyond saving although he might well be in the frame of mind in which he would allow himself to die.
- (b) It was assumed that the IRA would not in the final event wish the hunger strikers to die. If they did and the Government had made no concessions they would have lost what they saw as a major source of leverage. They might also feel Sands could exert more influence as an M.P. But they might hope that the Government would in the event finally give way and that it would still be possible to prompt an informal intervention from the ECHR rather than to have to make a formal complaint. There could still be a complaint if that was thought to be the only option.

4. Summing up the discussion, the Home Secretary said it was agreed that the Government should continue to take its robust line and insist on a formal complaint followed by an initiative

from the ECHR before it could countenance the Commission's involvement. It should facilitate a properly based investigation. The Government could not accept the informal involvement of the ECHR or that the Commission should act as a mediator. It must be assumed that matters would be pushed to the limit and the Government should be ready to accept that Sands might die. He noted that the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland judged it more dangerous that the Protestant community should feel that the Government had bought off Sands' death than that others should criticise the Government for allowing him to die. The Government should not be seen to have engineered a complaint or to have given ground. He noted the possibility that whatever happened Sands was more likely than not to die and that his death would create a new situation in which further thought would need to be given to the remaining hunger strikers. The British Ambassador in Dublin should tell Mr. Haughey that, sharing his wish to end the hunger strike without loss of life, the Government's position remained broadly unchanged. He should set out the circumstances in which the Government felt it could co-operate with the ECHR. The Government could offer no concessions on prison regimes in Northern Ireland, as Mr. Haughey recognised. The Prime Minister should be consulted about these conclusions.

*S. W. Boys Smith*

Private Office  
24.4.81.

S. W. BOYS SMITH  
Private Secretary

c.c. P.S. to the Prime Minister ✓  
P.S. to the Foreign & Commonwealth Secretary  
P.S. to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland  
P.S. to the Lord Privy Seal  
P.S. to Sir Kenneth Stowe  
Mr. Blelloch  
Mr. Fifoot  
Mr. L.P. Wright  
Mr. Andrew  
Mr. Heaton



cc. NIO  
Neville Giffin file AH

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

23 April 1981

Dear Francis,

NORTHERN IRELAND : REPLY TO THE THREE TDs

Barney Smith rang me from Dublin this morning to say that Leonard Figg was not altogether happy with the last sentence of the Prime Minister's reply to the three TDs, as set out in Nick Sanders's letter of 22 April to you. Instead Figg suggested the following last sentence:

"Everyone must wish to see an end to it and that the hunger strikers can be persuaded to desist from their present course".

I put this alternative sentence to the Prime Minister in Oman, and her response was that we should either stick to the version in Nick Sanders's letter or, if we thought it preferable, substitute the following sentence:

"It is for them to desist from their present course: I hope they will do so".

When I spoke to the Embassy in Dublin we quickly agreed that the new alternative sentence was better than the original. The final version of the reply to the three TDs is therefore:

"The position of the British Government on the hunger strike is clear and on the record. Any solution to the strike has always been in the hands of those who are on strike. It is for them to desist from their present course: I hope they will do so".

The Embassy will now pass this reply to the TDs as soon as possible. When they have done so, they will let the No 10 Press Office know at once, and we will release the text to the press.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Mike Hopkins (Northern Ireland Office).

Yours ever,

Alvi. Whitmore

Francis Richards Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

AH

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,  
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

23 April 1981

Nick Sanders Esq  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1

*Dear Nick*

Following your conversation with Rob Smith,  
I now attach notes for use by the Prime  
Minister in her TV interviews.

*Yours sincerely*

*Mary Wright*

MARY WRIGHT

POINTS FOR PM'S TV INTERVIEWS

1. The Hunger Strike

The Government's position is clear: we are not prepared to concede the demand for political status by prisoners who claim that their crimes had a political motive. Our commitment to a humanitarian regime in the prisons is equally clear: much has been done and we are committed to a continuing review. We want to save lives - there have been too many violent deaths in Northern Ireland. But Mr. Sands life is in his own hands.

2. The European Commission of Human Rights

(i) The ECHR has already ruled that there is no case for political status. HMG has taken account of the ECHR's comments last June. We have nothing to hide but it is not for HMG to raise the issue with the ECHR: if any prisoner wishes to lodge a complaint with the ECHR he may do so at any time.

(ii) [ If the question of individual ECHR Commissioners visiting the Maze is raised: The Commission has no status in this matter unless a complaint is put before them. If the Commission, having had a complaint, asked to visit the Maze, this would be carefully considered.] (Background: The ECHR visited a Northern Ireland prison some years ago in connexion with an earlier case).

**CONFIDENTIAL**

CONFIDENTIAL  
 DESKBY 240930Z DUBLIN  
 TO FLASH SALALAH  
 TELEGRAM NUMBER 8 OF 23 APRIL  
 INFO IMMEDIATE DUBLIN DEKSBY 240930Z

FOLLOWING FOR ALEXANDER PRIME MINISTER'S PARTY FROM WHITMORE  
 10 DOWNING STREET.

MAZE HUNGER STRIKE

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF INSTRUCTIONS FOR MR FIGG:

BEGINS

'YOUR TELEGRAM NO 116 OF 22 APRIL

AFTER CONSULTATION BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER THE HOME SECRETARY  
 AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND YOU SHOULD  
 RESPOND TO MR HAUGHEY AS FOLLOWS:

I) HMG FULLY SHARES HIS CONCERN THAT THE HUNGER STRIKE AND THE  
 PRISON PROTESTS SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO AND END WITHOUT LOSS OF LIFE  
 WITHIN OR WITH OUT THE PRISON.

II) OUR POSITION REMAINS AS SET OUT IN PREVIOUS STATEMENTS AND WE  
 ARE GLAD TO KNOW THAT THE TAOISEACH RECOGNISED THAT THERE CAN BE  
 NO QUESTION OF OUR MAKING ANY CONCESSION ON THE SUBSTANCE OF  
 THE PRISON REGIME IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

III) WE WOULD OF COURSE WELCOME A STATEMENT FROM THE  
 TAOISEACH URGING MR. SANDS THE OTHER HUNGER STRIKERS AND  
 THE PROTESTERS GENERALLY TO GIVE UP THEIR PROTESTS. *IF THE* *We would not oppose an*  
 INTERVENTION <sup>By</sup> OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS  
 (ECHR) ~~WOULD PROVIDE A BASIS FOR HIS MAKING SUCH A STATEMENT~~ *provided that the Commission's involvement is brought about*  
 THIS WOULD BE WELCOME AND TIMELY (NEXT TWO WORDS UNDERLINED)  
 PROVIDED THAT THE COMMISSION'S INVOLVEMENT IS BROUGHT ABOUT IN THE  
 ONLY WAY IN WHICH IT CAN BE BROUGHT ABOUT WITH THE WILLING  
 PARTICIPATION OF HMG NAMELY BY ACCEPTING AND RESPONDING TO A COMPL-  
 AINT MADE FROM ONE OF THE HUNGER STRIKERS.

IV) IN THE EVENT OF SUCH A COMPLAINT AND A SUBSEQUENT REQUEST  
 BY THE COMMISSION FOR ONE OR MORE COMMISSIONERS TO VISIT  
 HMP MAZE HMG WOULD AGREE TO THAT AS THE BEST WAY OF PROCEEDING  
 IN THESE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES NOTING INCIDENTALLY THAT  
 COMMISSIONERS HAD VISITED A NORTHERN IRELAND PRISON SOME  
 YEARS AGO IN CONNECTION WITH AN EARLIER COMPLAINT.

V) IT WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE CLEAR TO THE COMMISSION AND  
 PUBLICLY THAT THE COMMISSIONERS IN VISITING THE MAZE WOULD  
 IN NO WAY BE PUT IN A POSITION OF MEDIATING OR ARBITRATING  
 BUT WOULD BE REPORTING BACK TO THEIR COLLEAGUES SO THAT THE  
 COMMISSION WOULD HEAR THE COMPLAINT IN THE NORMAL WAY.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

/FOR



## CONFIDENTIAL

FOR YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION WE HAVE CONFIRMED INFORMALLY WITH THE ECHR (AND NO DOUBT THE DFA WILL SIMILARLY INFORM THEMSELVES) THAT SUCH A COMPLAINT COULD BE SENT BY TELEGRAM URGENTLY TO THE ECHR SECRETARY IN STRASBOURG THAT THE ECHR WOULD RESPOND URGENTLY BY ASKING BOTH HMG AND THE HUNGER STRIKERS TO DO NOTHING WHICH WOULD IMPEDE THE COMMISSION'S CONSIDERATION OF THE COMPLAINT AND THAT THE COMMISSION WOULD THEN ASK HMG IN THESE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES TO FACILITATE A VISIT TO THE MAZE BY THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMISSION ACCOMPANIED BY SUCH OTHER MEMBERS AS THE COMMISSION MAY WISH SO THAT THE COMMISSIONERS COULD INFORM THEMSELVES ABOUT THE CIRCUMSTANCES GIVING RISE TO THE COMPLAINT. THE COMMISSION WOULD ITSELF ANNOUNCE THAT IT HAD MADE THIS REQUEST WHICH HAD BEEN MET BY HMG.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT IN SPEAKING IN THESE TERMS TO MR HAUGHEY YOU SHOULD EMPHASISE THAT IN HMG'S VIEW THERE IS NO OTHER BASIS THAT A COMPLAINT TO THE COMMISSION FOR FACILITATING A VISIT TO THE PRISON BY THE COMMISSIONERS.''

END OF TEXT OF INSTRUCTIONS.

CARRINGTON

FCO|WH

RID

9P5360

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

DESKBY 240930Z DUBLIN

FM FCO 231937Z APR 81

TO FLASH SALALAH

TELEGRAM NUMBER 7 OF 23 APRIL

INFO IMMEDIATE DUBLIN(DESKBY 240930Z)

FOLLOWING FOR ALEXANDER PRIME MINISTER'S PARTY FROM WHITMORE 10  
DOWNING STREET.

MAZE HUNGER STRIKE

AS I REPORTED BY TELEPHONE EARLIER TODAY THE HOME SECRETARY AND  
THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND HAVE BEEN CONSIDERING  
HOW THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD PROCEED ON SANDS AND THE OTHER HUNGER  
STRIKERS PARTICULARLY IN THE LIGHT OF THE TAOISEACH'S CONVERSATION  
YESTERDAY WITH MR. FIGG(DUBLIN TELNO 116 OF 22 APRIL REFERS).  
THEY ARE AGREED THAT THERE CAN BE NO REPEAT NO QUESTION OF EUROPEAN  
COMMISSIONERS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS VISITING THE MAZE PRIVATELY AS  
SUGGESTED BY MR HAUGHEY TO SEE WHAT IMPROVEMENTS IN THE PRISON  
ADMINISTRATION BASED ON THE CRITICISMS IN THE ECHR'S REPORT HAD  
BEEN CARRIED OUT. RATHER THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD STAND FIRM ON THE  
POSITION WHICH IT FIRST ADOPTED SOME WEEKS AGO THAT IF THE ECHR  
IS TO BE INVOLVED IT CAN DO SO ONLY IN RESPONSE TO A FORMAL  
COMPLAINT AND THAT SUCH A COMPLAINT CAN BE MADE ONLY BY SANDS OR  
ANOTHER HUNGER STRIKER OR SOMEONE WITH THE NECESSARY STANDING TO  
ACT ON HIS BEHALF E.G. ONE OF HIS PARENTS. IF ON RECEIPT OF SUCH A  
COMPLAINT THE ECHR DECIDED TO INVESTIGATE IT AND FORMALLY ASKED HMG  
TO FACILITATE ITS ENQUIRY WE SHOULD AGREE TO COOPERATE  
INCLUDING ALLOWING ONE OR MORE COMMISSIONERS TO VISIT THE  
MAZE TO INFORM THEMSELVES AS TO THE CIRCUMSTANCES GIVING  
RISE TO THE COMPLAINT.

MR WHITELAW AND MR ATKINS ARE FIRMLY OF THE VIEW THAT HMG  
MUST DO NOTHING UNTIL THE ECHR'S FORMAL PROCESSES HAVE BEEN  
ACTIVATED IN THIS WAY BY A COMPLAINT BEING LAID WITH THEM.  
THEY BELIEVE THAT IF WE WERE TO BE SEEN TO BE ENCOURAGING  
THE SUBMISSION OF A COMPLAINT THE RISK OF A SERIOUS PROTESTANT  
REACTION WOULD BE SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASED.

IN THE MEANTIME SANDS' CONDITION CONTINUES TO DETERIORATE AND  
THE LATEST FORECAST IS THAT THOUGH HE IS STILL NOT IN A COMA  
HE IS LIKELY TO DIE AT THE WEEKEND. MR WHITELAW AND  
MR ATKINS WISH THE PRIME MINISTER TO KNOW THAT IN THEIR  
JUDGEMENT IT IS STILL MORE LIKELY THAN NOT THAT HE WILL DIE  
AND THAT WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO PREPARE OURSELVES FOR WHAT  
WOULD FOLLOW HIS DEATH.

GRATEFUL IF YOU COULD OBTAIN THE PRIME MINISTER'S APPROVAL  
THAT WE SHOULD PROCEED AS RECOMMENDED BY MR WHITELAW AND  
MR ATKINS. MIFT CONTAINS DRAFT INSTRUCTIONS FOR MR FIGG  
TO ACT UPON TOMORROW FRIDAY GRATEFUL FOR THE PRIME  
MINISTER AGREEMENT TO THESE BY 0930 GMT.

CARRINGTON  
FCO/WH  
RID

CONFIDENTIAL



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

22 April 1981

Northern Ireland: Reply to the three TDs

The Prime Minister has considered the draft reply to the three TDs submitted to her yesterday by the Northern Ireland Office.

She would like the reply to read as follows:

"The position of the British Government on the hunger strike is clear and on the record. Any solution to the strike has always been in the hands of those who are on strike. Those who wish to see an end to the strike should concentrate on persuading the hunger strikers to desist from their present course."

I should be grateful if you would make arrangements for this reply to be conveyed by HM Ambassador in Dublin as soon as possible.

I am copying this letter to Mike Hopkins (Northern Ireland Office).

**N. J. SANDERS**

Francis Richards, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

GPS 75

CONFIDENTIAL

DESKBY 222000Z

FM FCO 221935Z APR 1981  
TO IMMEDIATE MUSCAT  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 121 OF 22 APRIL

FOLLOWING FROM ALEXANDER, PRIME MINISTER'S PARTY FROM  
SANDERS, 10 DOWNING STREET.

DUBLIN TEL NO 116 OF 22 APRIL, COPIED TO YOU, REPORTS A  
CONVERSATION ALONG THE EXPECTED LINES WITH MR. HAUGHEY THIS  
AFTERNOON. WE WILL LET YOU HAVE ADVICE ON THE NEXT MOVES AS SOON  
AS POSSIBLE TOMORROW MORNING.

CARRINGTON

NORTHERN IRELAND LIMITED  
RID PS/MR HURD  
NAD PS/MR RIDLEY  
INFORMATION D PS/MR BLAKER  
WED PS/PUS  
MAED SIR A ACLAND  
NEWS D CHIEF CLERK  
SECURITY D MR ADAMS  
PUSD MR BULLARD  
PS MR FERGUSON  
PS/LPS LORD N G LENNOX  
MR BRAITHWAITE

ADDITIONAL DISTN.  
NORTHERN IRELAND

CONFIDENTIAL

The NIO draft reply is as follows:

"The position of the British Government on the hunger strike is clear and on the record. A solution to the strike has always been in the hands of the strikers. Against that background I can see no purpose in the meeting proposed."

Those on hunger strike. Those who wish to see an end to the strike should concentrate on persuading the hunger strikers to desist from their present course.

GRS 350

CONFIDENTIAL

DESKBY 222200Z

FM F C O 221936Z APR 81

TO IMMEDIATE MUSCAT

TELEGRAM NUMBER 120 OF 22 APRIL

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM NOW REPEATED TO YOU AT REQUEST OF RESIDENT CLERK  
WAS RECEIVED FROM DUBLIN RELEGRAM NUMBER 116 OF 22 APRIL.

TO FLASH F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 116 OF 22 APRIL

AND TO IMMEDIATE N I O (BELFAST)

1. THE TAOISEACH ASKED ME TO CALL AT 4.30 PM THIS AFTERNOON.

HE SAID HE WAS VERY WORRIED ABOUT THE RECENT VIOLENCE IN THE NORTH  
AND FEARED IT COULD SPILL OVER INTO THE REPUBLIC IF SANDS DIES.  
MATTERS HAD TAKEN A TURN FOR THE WORSE BECAUSE OF THE ELECTION  
OF SANDS TO PARLIAMENT. HE WAS UNDER PRESSURE TO DO SOMETHING  
BECAUSE THE PRIME MINISTER HAD BEEN DRAWN INTO THE AFFAIR BY THE  
TELEGRAM SENT TO HER BY THE THREE IRISH EURO-MPS. HE WISHED TO  
CONSULT US ABOUT WHAT HE MIGHT SAY.

2. MR HAUGHEY SAID HE HAD QUITE AN OPEN MIND. A PUBLIC STATEMENT  
SEEMED DESIRABLE BUT HE WANTED TO FIT IT IN TO SOMETHING WE  
COULD DO ON OUR SIDE. A POSSIBLE FORMULA MIGHT BE BUILT ON THE  
VISIT TO LONDON BY TWO EUROPEAN COMMISSIONERS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS  
WHOM THE IRISH BELIEVED TO BE NORGAARD AND FROWEIN. FOLLOWING  
MR ATKINS'S STATEMENT LAST NIGHT THAT WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO  
TALK TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION IF THEY REQUESTED IT, IT MIGHT BE  
POSSIBLE TO ARRANGE FOR THE TWO COMMISSIONERS TO VISIT THE MAZE  
PRIVATELY TO SEE WHAT IMPROVEMENTS IN THE PRISON ADMINISTRATION

HE SAID HE WAS VERY WORRIED ABOUT THE RECENT VIOLENCE IN THE NORTH AND FEARED IT COULD SPILL OVER INTO THE REPUBLIC IF SANDS DIES. MATTERS HAD TAKEN A TURN FOR THE WORSE BECAUSE OF THE ELECTION OF SANDS TO PARLIAMENT. HE WAS UNDER PRESSURE TO DO SOMETHING BECAUSE THE PRIME MINISTER HAD BEEN DRAWN INTO THE AFFAIR BY THE TELEGRAM SENT TO HER BY THE THREE IRISH EURO-MPS. HE WISHED TO CONSULT US ABOUT WHAT HE MIGHT SAY.

2. MR HAUGHEY SAID HE HAD QUITE AN OPEN MIND. A PUBLIC STATEMENT SEEMED DESIRABLE BUT HE WANTED TO FIT IT IN TO SOMETHING WE COULD DO ON OUR SIDE. A POSSIBLE FORMULA MIGHT BE BUILT ON THE VISIT TO LONDON BY TWO EUROPEAN COMMISSIONERS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS WHOM THE IRISH BELIEVED TO BE NORGAARD AND FROWEIN. FOLLOWING MR ATKINS'S STATEMENT LAST NIGHT THAT WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO TALK TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION IF THEY REQUESTED IT, IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO ARRANGE FOR THE TWO COMMISSIONERS TO VISIT THE MAZE PRIVATELY TO SEE WHAT IMPROVEMENTS IN THE PRISON ADMINISTRATION BASED ON THE CRITICISMS IN PARA 64 OF THEIR REPORT HAD BEEN CARRIED OUT. EVERYONE KNEW THAT MUCH HAD BEEN DONE IN THIS RESPECT, INCLUDING CIVILIAN CLOTHING. IF THIS BACKGROUND COULD BE ARRANGED, THEN THE TAOISEACH THOUGHT HE COULD APPEAL IN A PUBLIC STATEMENT TO SANDS TO COME OFF THE HUNGER STRIKE BECAUSE OF THE INTEREST AND ATTENTION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION.

3. MR HAUGHEY THOUGHT THAT ALTHOUGH SANDS MIGHT BE PREPARED TO DIE, AT HEART HE PROBABLY DID NOT WISH TO DO SO. IT WAS IN OUR URGENT INTERESTS TO PUT OUR HEADS TOGETHER AND DEVISE SOME FORMULA LIKE THAT IN PARA 2 WHICH MIGHT JUST POSSIBLY DO THE TRICK. MR HAUGHEY SAID HE WOULD BE AVAILABLE TO SEE ME AT ANY TIME TOMORROW MORNING WITH ANY SUGGESTIONS WE MIGHT HAVE AND I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR URGENT INSTRUCTIONS ACCORDINGLY.

CONFIDENTIAL

GROUPS 290

CONFIDENTIAL

FROM DUBLIN 221654Z APRIL 1981

TO FLASH F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 116 OF 22 APRIL

AND TO IMMEDIATE N I O (BELFAST)

1. THE TAOISEACH ASKED ME TO CALL AT 4.30 PM THIS AFTERNOON. HE SAID HE WAS VERY WORRIED ABOUT THE RECENT VIOLENCE IN THE NORTH AND FEARED IT COULD SPILL OVER INTO THE REPUBLIC IF SANDS DIES. MATTERS HAD TAKEN A TURN FOR THE WORSE BECAUSE OF THE ELECTION OF SANDS TO PARLIAMENT. HE WAS UNDER PRESSURE TO DO SOMETHING BECAUSE THE PRIME MINISTER HAD BEEN DRAWN INTO THE AFFAIR BY THE TELEGRAM SENT TO HER BY THE THREE IRISH EURO-MPS. HE WISHED TO CONSULT US ABOUT WHAT HE MIGHT SAY.

2. MR HAUGHEY SAID HE HAD QUITE AN OPEN MIND. A PUBLIC STATEMENT SEEMED DESIRABLE BUT HE WANTED TO FIT IT IN TO SOMETHING WE COULD DO ON OUR SIDE. A POSSIBLE FORMULA MIGHT BE BUILT ON THE VISIT TO LONDON BY TWO EUROPEAN COMMISSIONERS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS WHOM THE IRISH BELIEVED TO BE NORGAARD AND FROWEIN. FOLLOWING MR ATKINS'S STATEMENT LAST NIGHT THAT WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO TALK TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION IF THEY REQUESTED IT, IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO ARRANGE FOR THE TWO COMMISSIONERS TO VISIT THE MAZE PRIVATELY TO SEE WHAT IMPROVEMENTS IN THE PRISON ADMINISTRATION BASED ON THE CRITICISMS IN PARA 64 OF THEIR REPORT HAD BEEN CARRIED OUT. EVERYONE KNEW THAT MUCH HAD BEEN DONE IN THIS RESPECT, INCLUDING CIVILIAN CLOTHING. IF THIS BACKGROUND COULD BE ARRANGED, THEN THE TAOISEACH THOUGHT HE COULD APPEAL IN A PUBLIC STATEMENT TO SANDS TO COME OFF THE HUNGER STRIKE BECAUSE OF THE INTEREST AND ATTENTION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION.

3. MR HAUGHEY THOUGHT THAT ALTHOUGH SANDS MIGHT BE PREPARED TO DIE, AT HEART HE PROBABLY DID NOT WISH TO DO SO. IT WAS IN OUR URGENT INTERESTS TO PUT OUR HEADS TOGETHER AND DEVISE SOME FORMULA LIKE THAT IN PARA 2 WHICH MIGHT JUST POSSIBLY DO THE TRICK. MR HAUGHEY SAID HE WOULD BE AVAILABLE TO SEE ME AT ANY TIME TOMORROW MORNING WITH ANY SUGGESTIONS WE MIGHT HAVE AND I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR URGENT INSTRUCTIONS ACCORDINGLY.

FIGG

NORTHERN IRELAND LIMITED	
RID	PS/MR HURD
NAD	PS/MR RIDLEY
INFORMATION D	PS/MR BLAKER
WED	PS/PUS
MAED	SIR A ACLAND
NEWS D	CHIEF CLERK
SECURITY D	MR ADAMS
PUSD	MR BULLARD
PS	MR FERGUSSON
PS/LPS	LORD N G LENNOX
	MR BRAITHWAITE

ADDITIONAL DISTN.  
NORTHERN IRELAND

CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL



Ref. A04748

MR. SANDERS<sup>ms</sup>

---

I was rung up by Mr. Dermot Nally in the Taoiseach's office this morning. The first purpose of the call was to discuss the date for the next meeting of the Steering Group of the Anglo-Irish joint studies.

2. Mr. Nally went on to talk about the current situation in Northern Ireland. He said that the Taoiseach and his colleagues were very worried that, if Mr. Sands died in the next five or six days, "the whole area would go up in flames". The Taoiseach had asked him to convey the message that he was extremely anxious to help in any way he could, and to ask us whether there was anything he could do which might be helpful. Mr. Nally said that the Taoiseach would have to do something today or tomorrow because of the political pressures in the Republic of Ireland.

3. Mr. Nally emphasised that the Taoiseach's concern was purely the humanitarian one. The Irish Government did not want us to meet the demands for political status. He wondered whether there was any future in getting the European Commission of Human Rights (ECHR) involved. He had heard the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on the television yesterday say something which suggested that something in this area might be acceptable.

4. I said that my understanding was that the ECHR had made it clear that there was no official locus for the Commission in the matter, because they had no complaint before them. I understood, however, that certain Commissioners had expressed a willingness to offer their good offices on a personal basis. I did not think that we should exclude the possibility of some of the Commissioners visiting Northern Ireland on a personal basis, so long as there was no suggestion that they were coming to mediate between Mr. Sands or other prisoners and the Government.

5. Mr. Nally quickly disclaimed any idea of mediation. He said, however, that there were certain recommendations in paragraph 64 of the ECHR Report last year, which might provide a basis on which Commissioners could say that there was a continuing ECHR interest which they should be following up.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL



6. Mr. Nally said that the Taoiseach would be sending a message "through normal channels" later in the day, but in view of the shortage of time the Taoiseach was anxious to get this thought in to us at the earliest possible moment.

7. I reported this conversation to Mr. Marshall in the Northern Ireland Office. He thought that it would be right to wait until the message was received, presumably through the Irish Ambassador here or through Mr. Figg in Dublin, and then look at that together with the approaches received from members of the ECHR.

8. I am sending copies of this minute to Mr. Walden (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and Mr. Harrington (Northern Ireland Office).

REA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

22nd April, 1981

CONFIDENTIAL

PART 2 ends:-

NJS to NIO + att of 21/4/81

PART 3 begins:-

RTA to NJS (A04748) of 22/4/81