



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

28 October 1980

Dear Mr. Paisley,

You telegraphed me on the morning of 23 October with advice not to make any concessions to Republican prisoners at the Maze in Northern Ireland. You will since have been made aware - most recently by Michael Alison's reply to the Private Notice Question from Enoch Powell yesterday - that while the Government have decided to change the arrangements for male prisoners' clothing in the sense of substituting a prison issue civilian-type clothing for the existing prison uniform, they continue to be absolutely opposed to the granting of any special or "political" status for these or any other class of prisoners. Amnesty is not an option, and while I am sure that the idea of prisoners fasting to death is as repugnant to you as it is to me, that will indeed be the outcome if any persist in their hunger strike.

Yours sincerely,

(SGD) MT

The Reverend Ian Paisley, MP.