

Dubly 150900Z

NORTHERN IRELAND: ADVANCE COPIES

18

PS
PS/LPS
PS/PUS
MR BULLARD
MR FERGUSSON
HD/RID
HD/PUSD (2)
HD/EPD
HD/NEWS DEPT

N IRELAND OFFICE - PS TO SEC OF STATE
RM 66 A/2 GGS
N IRELAND OFFICE [4 copies]
SIR K STOWE
MR MORIATY
MR MARSHALL
MR BUXTON
CABINET OFFICE - SIR R ARMSTRONG
DIO

NO 10 DOWNING STREET

RESIDENT CLERK

GROUPS 145
CONFIDENTIAL
FROM DUBLIN 150805Z JULY 1981
TO IMMEDIATE F C O (DESKBY 150900Z)
TELEGRAM NUMBER 241 OF 15 JULY 1981

IMMEDIATE
ADVANCE COPY

AND TO IMMEDIATE N I O (BELFAST)
AND TO PRIORITY WASHINGTON AND UKMIS NEW YORK (FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY)

HUNGER STRIKE.

1. I UNDERSTAND WE ARE NOW ENLISTING THE HELP OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS. WITH RESPECT, I THINK IT IS TOO LATE TO DO SO. A FEW WEEKS AGO THIS WOULD HAVE STOOD A FAIR CHANCE BUT WITH THE FAILURE OF THE INTERVENTION OF THE IRISH COMMISSION FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE THE EVIDENCE IS THAT THE PRISONERS AND HUNGER STRIKERS WILL NOT DEAL WITH ANY MORE THIRD PARTIES.

2. IF DOHERTY DIES THE CONSEQUENT BY-ELECTION WILL PROBABLY MAKE THE IRISH GOVERNMENT'S POSITION EVEN MORE PRECARIOUS. WE SHALL BE BLAMED. THE CONSEQUENCES, HERE AND INTERNATIONALLY MAY CAUSE US GRAVE DIFFICULTIES. THESE RISKS SEEM FAR GRATER THAN THE ONE

REPRESENTED BY TALKING DIRECTLY WITH THE HUNGER STRIKERS. THIS NEED
NOT CUT ACROSS THE RED CROSS INITIATIVE. BOTH MIGHT PROCEED
TOGETHER. BUT WITH TIME SO DANGEROUSLY SHORT I RECOMMEND IN THE
STRONGEST POSSIBLE WAY THAT WE SHOULD DELAY NO LONGER IN EXPLAINING
DIRECTLY TO THE HUNGER STRIKERS WHAT IS ON OFFER.

FIGG.

NNNNNM

SENT/RECD AT 1509EEEE152850Z HMT/IJC