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3/4

FOLLOWING FOR THE CABINET OFFICE
FROM NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE BELFAST

~~Indexed to deques~~
Mr Wynne
MS 6 vii

IMMEDIATE

SECRET

41633Z

NUMBER 461

4/7/87.

BT

FOLLOWING FOR MR. *~~~~~* (TO AWAIT COLLECTION)
COPY TO NO 10 DUTY CLERK

FROM HAG

FOLLOWING IS COPY OF MR. ALISON'S STATEMENT

QUOTE

1. THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE NIO, MR MICHAEL ALISON MP, TODAY AGAIN MET MEMBERS OF THE IRISH COMMISSION FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE. THE COMMISSION REQUESTED PERMISSION TO VISIT THE PRISONERS REFUSING FOOD AND THE MINISTER OF STATE READILY AGREED, THERE BEING A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING THAT THERE COULD BE NO NEGOTIATION.
2. THE MINISTER AGAIN EMPHASISED THE POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT IN RELATION TO THE PRISONERS' FIVE DEMANDS, AS SET OUT IN THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S STATEMENT OF 30 JUNE, AND EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE COMMISSION WOULD IN TURN EXPLAIN ITS SIGNIFICANCE TO THOSE ON HUNGER STRIKE.
3. THE MINISTER EXPLAINED THAT IF, WITHIN A HUMANE AND ENLIGHTENED PRISON REGIME THERE WAS ANY GROUND FOR COMPLAINT, THE AVENUE OF PROCEEDING THROUGH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS REMAINED OPEN.
4. THE MINISTER EMPHASISED TO THE ICJP THE PRINCIPLE THAT THE GOVERNOR AND PRISON AUTHORITIES ARE AND MUST REMAIN IN CONTROL OF THE PRISON REGIME.

BT

~ Name deleted and retained
under Section 3(4). @Wayland
27 October 2011

SENT AT 04/1751Z JLAC

RECD AT 04/1751Z BCC

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Rufaxed to chequer.

4/7/87.

FOLLOWING FOR THE CABINET OFFICE
FROM NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE BELFAST

IMMEDIATE

SECRET

41557Z

NUMBER 460

BT

FOLLOWING FOR * * (TO AWAIT COLLECTION)
COPY TO NO 10 DUTY CLERK

FROM HAG

THIS IS THE TEXT ISSUED BY THE PRISONERS TODAY.

QUOTE

BELFAST REPUBLICAN PRESS CENTRE: 4.7.81. TEL 46841.
WE HAVE BEEN ASKED TO ISSUE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT, SMUGGLED OUT
OF THE H-BLOCKS OF LONG KESH, FROM THE PRO OF THE PROTESTING
REPUBLICAN PRISONERS.
"WE, THE PROTESTING REPUBLICAN PRISONERS IN LONG KESH, HAVING
REPLIED IN SHORT TO H. ATKINS STATEMENT OF JUNE 30TH, WISH TO EXPAND
OUR VIEW ON THIS STATEMENT.
"1. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE HUNGER STRIKES
IN LONG KESH. THE ENDING OF SPECIAL CATEGORY STATUS WAS A
POLITICAL TACTIC USED BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IN ITS ATTEMPT TO
CRIMINALISE THE REPUBLICAN ATTACK ON BRITISH IMPERIALISM IN
IRELAND. THE EXISTENCE OF SPECIAL LEGISLATION, SPECIAL COURTS, AND
SPECIAL INTERROGATION PLUS THE BRITISH ADMINISTRATION'S REFUSAL TO
ACKNOWLEDGE A SPECIAL CATEGORY OF PRISONERS, ALL CONTRIBUTE TO
THE PLACING OF THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS ISSUE ON THAT ADMINISTRA-
TION'S SHOULDERS.
"FURTHERMORE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAVE HAD AMPLE OPPORTUNITIES
DURING THE COURSE OF THIS ISSUE TO AVOID THE OCCURENCE AND
RE-OCCURENCE OF HUNGER STRIKE. THE CARDINAL O'FIACH - NIO TALKS
AND THE REFUSAL TO HONOUR THE DECEMBER 18TH AGREEMENT ARE PRIME
EXAMPLES OF THIS.

LORD GARDINER, LIKE SO MANY OTHER BRIT-APPOINTED EXAMINERS, WAS
SENT TO IRELAND TO DO A SPECIFIC JOB -- TO RECOMMEND THE ENDING OF
SPECIAL CATEGORY STATUS SO THAT LEGAL CREDIBILITY COULD BE
ATTACHED TO THE CRIMINALISATION POLICY.

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(Wayland, 27 October 2011)

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3. IT IS WRONG FOR THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO SAY THAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT FROM OTHER PRISONERS. WE WOULD WARMLY WELCOME THE INTRODUCTION OF THE FIVE DEMANDS FOR ALL PRISONERS. THEREFORE ON THIS MAJOR POINT OF BRITISH POLICY THERE IS NO SACRIFICE OF PRINCIPLE INVOLVED.

4. WE BELIEVE THAT THE GRANTING OF THE FIVE DEMANDS TO ALL PRISONERS WOULD NOT IN ANY WAY MEAN THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD BE FORFEITING CONTROL OF THE PRISON, NOR WOULD THEIR SAY ON PRISON ACTIVITIES BE GREATLY DIMINISHED: BUT THE PRISONER COULD HAVE HIS DIGNITY RESTORED AND CEASE TO OCCUPY THE ROLE OF ESTABLISHMENT ZOMBIE. 2

5. THE E.C.H.R. CRITISED THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT FOR BEING INFLEXIBLE AND FOR ALLOWING SUCH AN IMPASSE TO DEVELOP. FLEXIBILITY IS IN NOT PERPETUATING PROTESTS BUT RATHER TRYING TO REMOVE OR RESOLVE THE CAUSE OF DISSENT WHICH FERMENTS SUCH PROTEST.

6. MR. ATKINS OUTLINES THE PRESENT WORK ROUTINE UNDER THE TITLE "PRISON ACTIVITY". IT IS A CRUDE SYSTEM WHICH MR. ATKINS DISGUISES WITH FLOWERY JARGON. YET, IT SHOULD NOT BE A MAJOR POINT OF CONTENTION BETWEEN OURSELVES.

BRITISH GOVERNMENT RECOGNISES AS "PRISON WORK" WE DO NOT. THEREFORE WITH GOODWILL "WORK" AND THE ACHIEVING OF A COMPATIBLE ARRANGEMENT SHOULD BE AVAILABLE WITHOUT LOSS OF PRINCIPLE.

"BESIDES SELF-EDUCATION WHICH WOULD BE THE MAIN PROP IN ANY AGREEMENT, WE ARE PREPARED TO MAINTAIN OUR CELLS, WINGS, BLOCKS AND ENGAGE IN ANY ACTIVITY WHICH WE DEFINE AS SELF MAINTANENCE.

7. MR. ATKINS IS EITHER MISINFORMED OR EXAGGERATING THE FREE ASSOCIATION DEMAND.

FREE ASSOCIATION MEANS THAT THERE WOULD BE FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT WITHIN THE WINGS. SUPERVISION NEED NOT BE RESTRICTED. THAT IS A MATTER FOR THE REGIMES DISCRETION. THERE WOULD BE NO INTERFERENCE WITH PRISON OFFICERS WHO WOULD MAINTAIN THEIR SUPERVISORY ROLE. IT MUST BE REMEMBERED THAT H-BLOCKS ARE CONTROL UNITS AND EACH

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WING IS BUILT TO ACCOMODATE 25 PRISONERS. SO IT IS RATHER A RED HERRING TO SPEAK OF THE REGIME LOSING CONTROL OF THE PRISON IF THE PRISONERS HAD FREEDOM OF THE WING. EQUALLY IT IS MISLEADING TO QUOTE FIGURES OF 100 PRISONERS PRESUMABLY ASSOCIATING TOGETHER. WE BELIEVE THERE SHOULD BE WING VISITS BUT WE DO NOT ENVISAGE OURSELVES (ALTHOUGH MR. ATKINS DOES) RUNNING AROUND THE BLOCK AS WE PLEASE IN LARGE NUMBERS. IT IS UNREALISTIC TO EXPECT LOYALISTS AND REPUBLICANS TO INTERGRATE SATISFACTORILY TOGETHER. FORCED INTERGRATION OF THE DELIBERATE CREATION OF A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THOSE WHO BEAR ARMS IN RESPECT OF THEIR HIGHLY CONFLICTING POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES IS WRONG AND CAN ONLY LEAD TO TROUBLE. EVEN MR. PAISLEY RECOGNISED THIS FACT SEVERAL YEARS BACK. IF STUDIED CAREFULLY IT WILL BE SEEN THAT OUR DEFINITION OF FREE ASSOCIATION IS FAR REMOVED FROM WHAT SEEMS TO BE MR. ATKINS.

8. PRISON CLOTHES ARE PRISON CLOTHES. IT IS ILLUSORY TO MINIMISE THE WEARING OF PRISON CLOTHES TO HALF THE WEEK. PRISONERS LIKE EVERYONE ELSE SLEEP AND FOR MOST OF THE OTHER HALF ARE FORCED TO WEAR PRISON CLOTHES. THE WOMEN IN ARMAGH WEAR THEIR OWN CLOTHES AND THERE IS NO OBJECTIONAL REASON WHY ALL PRISONERS SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO WEAR THEIR OWN CLOTHES.

9. IF WE ACCEPT THAT TOILETRIES, AND TO A LESSER EXTENT READING MATERIAL ARE ESSENTIAL, THEN THE WEEKLY PARCEL AMOUNTS TO FOUR POUNDS OF FRUIT, THAT SPEAKS FOR ITSELF.

10. LOST REMISSION IS A RESULT OF THE PROTEST AND IS NOT CONNECTED WITH THE CAUSE OF IT. AS THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT SAYS, THE MACHINERY EXISTS TO RECLAIM IT, - YET FOR SOME REASON THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS BEING AMBIGUOUS ON THIS MATTER. WHAT CONSTITUTES A "SUBSEQUENT GOOD BEHAVIOUR PERIOD"? WHAT DOES ONE FIFTH RETURN OF REMISSION MEAN?? THIS SHOULD NOT BE AN AREA OF DISAGREEMENT FOR IT DOES NOT DIRECTLY AFFECT THE RUNNING OF THE SYSTEM. BUT IT IS OF MUTUAL BENEFIT TO ALL WHOM IT AFFECTS THAT FULL REMISSION IS GIVEN BACK TO WE PRISONERS.

CONCLUSION.....

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CONCLUSION

IN GIVING OUR VIEWS ON WHAT MR. ATKINS SAID WE HAVE OUTLINED WHAT SHOULD BE THE BASIS OF A SOLUTION WITHOUT LOSS OF PRINCIPLE TO EITHER SIDE IN THIS CONFLICT.

IT COULD WELL BE THAT MR. ATKINS HAS BEEN MISINFORMED ABOUT OUR DEMANDS. IT CERTAINLY APPEARS FROM HIS JUNE 20TH STATEMENT THAT THIS IS SO. WE ASK ALL PARTIES INVOLVED TO STUDY THIS STATEMENT CLOSELY. WE PARTICULARLY ASK THE BRITISH TO STUDY IT. IT SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN LIGHTLY.

BY ASKING THE BRITISH ADMINISTRATION TO COME IN TO DISCUSS A RESOLUTION WE ASK NOTHING UNREASONABLE. IT IS COMMON FOR OFFICIALS FROM THAT ADMINISTRATION TO VISIT THIS PRISON AND CONVERSE WITH PRISONERS. IT HAS BEEN DONE BEFORE. COMRADES OF OURS HAVE DIED AND EIGHT OF OUR OTHER COMRADES PRESENTLY FACE DEATH ON HUNGER STRIKE. OUR PEOPLE ON THE OUTSIDE HAVE DIED AND MORE MAY DIE. THAT IS WHY WE SEEK IMMEDIATE TALKS WITH THE BRITISH ADMINISTRATION TO SEEK A SOLUTION TO THE H-BLOCK PROTESTS. IT IS A REASONABLE REQUEST."

SIGNED P.R.O. H-BLOCKS.

UNQUOTE

BT