



Handwritten notes: SS, Ireland, CCN 10, Press

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