

Pine Minister

SPECIAL MEETING: 30 DECEMBER 1985

Not a very good statement, I fear, despite writing from us.

JOINT STATEMENT

Could be worse - not

COP 30/12

At the request of Mr Peter Barry, a special meeting of the Conference, in accordance with Article 3 of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, was held in London on 30 December.

Mr King informed Mr Barry of the facts regarding the current hunger strike in the Maze Prison and the rights of appeal available to all those concerned. He explained the policy that no prisoner should be compelled to accept food against his will.

Mr Barry put forward views and proposals designed to give substantial expression to the aim of ensuring public confidence in the administration of justice.

Both sides agreed that the present hunger strike was to be deplored as a wrong and wasteful attempt to bring about change in this area.

The next regular meeting of the Conference will be held as planned early in the New Year.

A. copy to
Mr. Ward NTO

CM

Mr. Goodchild to
HE

CDP
9/1

28 Dec.

Dear Mr Powell

I write to thank the Prime Minister for her kind invitation to lunch at No. 10 Downing Street on Wednesday 15 January 1986 at 12.30. I very much regret that I am unable to accept. I shall be at Stanford University that week and do not return to the UK until 25 January 1986. Please convey my apology.

With respect to the stated purpose of the lunch should I have had the opportunity to attend I would have spoken to the comments on the Agreement of the Council of Social Welfare of the Methodist Church in Ireland, a copy of which is in the Prime Minister's possession. I would have

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emphasized paragraph 3 in particular;
that paragraph refers to the future. (I
would add that the full Council met
on Monday 23 December and un-
animously endorsed its Northern Executive
'comment'.)

Yours sincerely
Desmond Rea

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~~SECRET~~

Prime Minister (2)
*You may interested to see
the extract from the Agreement.
It carries the NEO view.*

ARTICLE 3

MEA 24/12

The Conference shall meet at Ministerial or official level, as required. The business of the Conference will thus receive attention at the highest level. Regular and frequent Ministerial meetings shall be held; and in particular special meetings shall be convened at the request of either side. Officials may meet in subordinate groups. Membership of the Conference and of sub-groups shall be small and flexible. When the Conference meets at Ministerial level the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and an Irish Minister designated as the Permanent Irish Ministerial Representative shall be joint Chairmen. Within the framework of the Conference other British and Irish Ministers may hold or attend meetings as appropriate: when legal matters are under consideration the Attorneys General may attend. Ministers may be accompanied by their officials and their professional advisers: for example, when questions of security policy or security co-operation are being discussed, they may be accompanied by the Chief Constable of the Royal Ulster Constabulary and the Commissioner of the Garda Siochana; or when questions of economic or social policy or co-operation are being discussed, they may be accompanied by officials of the relevant Departments. A Secretariat shall be established by the two Governments to service the Conference on a continuing basis in the discharge of its functions as set out in this Agreement.

~~SECRET~~