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'Don't prejudge Sands movie' plea

By Staff Reporter

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CRITICS of a new movie about the republican Hunger Strike have been challenged to watch the controversial film before attacking it.

Former Maze prison inmate Raymond McCartney, now a Sinn Fein MLA for Foyle, urged sceptics not to indulge in knee-jerk reactions.



Hunger depicts the last days of IRA man Bobby Sands, who starved himself to death inside the Maze in 1981.

The work by director Steve McQueen is being premiered at this week's Cannes film festival but already some unionist politicians have spoken out against it.

DUP MP Gregory Campbell has tabled a motion at Westminster criticising the film's content.

Ten republican prisoners died during the Hunger Strike protest over the British government's refusal to grant them political status.

Mr McCartney, who refused food during a similar protest in the Maze a year before Sands died, said Hunger portrayed a historic event of real worldwide significance.

Portrayed: Bobby Sands

"Gregory Campbell has tabled a motion at Westminster against this film," he said.

"Has he actually seen this film?"

"I would urge people, especially Gregory, to watch the film when they get the opportunity rather than [have] knee-jerk reactions."

Mr Campbell dismissed Mr McCartney's argument as nonsense.

"I must remember that the next time I come across a bottle of poison," he said.

"Is he saying I'd have to drink it to find out it's no good?"

"I've no objection whatever to


any TV company or media outlet doing a film on the hunger strikers, provided it gives an accurate portrayal of these gangsters and what they did."

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