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HM Prison Maze (Cellular)
LISBURN
Co Antrim

20 July 1981

Director of Prison (Ops)
Northern Ireland Office
Dundonald House
Upper Newtownards Road
BELFAST BT4 3SU

VISIT - INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE RED CROSS

Messrs Frank Schmidt, Philippe Grand D'Hauteville and Dr Russback of the International Committee for the Red Cross visited the Prison on 16, 17, 18 and 19 July 1981. At the conclusion of their visit they informed me that a written report would be forwarded to the Northern Ireland Office in due course but that they wished to give me their immediate comments now. They stressed that the written report would be made after time for reflection and that these initial comments were being presented only as an immediate impression. The points they made were:-

1. HUNGER STRIKE AND 5 DEMANDS OF PROTESTING PRISONERS

This will be mentioned in an objective manner but no opinion will be expressed as they regard the matter as "political".

2. NON CO-OPERATING 'H' BLOCKS

They will give a description of what they saw. However, they will not make recommendations concerning facilities. All the prisoners they spoke to stated that living conditions were irrelevant compared to their political demands.

3. ORDERLIES - NCP BLOCKS

Orderlies complained that they were not getting as much remission off as previously. I explained that in fact they benefitted under the Royal Prerogative and that since the dirty protest had ended conditions were much more tolerable. They accepted my explanation and merely asked that the position be explained to the Orderlies.

4. CONFORMING BLOCKS

(a) OVERCROWDING. They considered that even with 25 prisoners in a Wing our recreational and hobby rooms were over-crowded and that there was insufficient room for the number of activities we provide.

(b) SEGREGATION. Protestant prisoners had expressed fears that if the protest ended they would be swamped four to one by RCs. They wanted segregation. I pointed out the success of the Conforming Blocks up to the present and suggested it would be a retrograde step if segregation was introduced.

(c) LODGING OF COMPLAINTS. They stated that some prisoners were scared to make complaints in case they were victimised by staff. It is difficult to refute this unless one has specific cases.

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- (d) LOCK-UP ON WEEK-ENDS. Prisoners complained that in one of the Secretary of State's letters to prisoners it was implied that they had association all day on Saturdays whereas they were locked from time to time.
- (f) LOCK AND UNLOCK. Some prisoners complained that on occasions they were ^{UN}locked late and locked up earlier than the official times. One had to concede that this was sometimes true but that we monitored it closely.
5. They concluded by thanking me for our co-operation and complimented the staff on their friendliness and helpfulness. I replied that we welcomed their visit and felt that we had nothing to be ashamed of in the Prison.



A W HAYES
Deputy Governor