



*Primi Primiti* <sup>to</sup> *Primiti* (2)

Ara Coeli  
Ard Mhacha, Armagh

24th June, 1981.

You will want to be  
aware of this exchange -

Dear Secretary of State,

Thank you for your letter of 22nd instant in reference to the Bishops' statement of 17th June. I trust our words will make a notable contribution towards the restoration of peace and particularly towards the resolution of the prison deadlock.

I am gratified that you are impressed by the compassion, urgency and directness of the Bishops' statement. You will recall that after speaking forthrightly to the hunger-strikers it addressed itself to those in authority by

- (1) quoting the words of Our Holy Father at Drogheda 'to all who bear political responsibility for the affairs of Ireland';
- (2) commending the recent proposals of the Irish Commission for Justice and Peace on clothing, association and work, with a request that the Government should show openness on these issues.

The Bishops believe that the proposals of the Commission for Justice and Peace would provide the avenue for a solution. To achieve this it is essential therefore that there should be movement from both sides.

Since your letter made no reference to this part of the Bishops' statement of 17th June, may I express the hope that it will be given serious consideration without delay?

As your letter to me was released to the Press, it is my intention to make the text of this letter available to the media later this evening.

Yours very sincerely,  
Thomas O'Riail

Cardinal Archbishop of Armagh

The Rt. Hon. Humphrey Atkins, M.P.,  
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland,  
Northern Ireland Office,  
Stormont Castle,  
BELFAST,  
BT4 3ST.