

# COISTE NÁISIÚNTA H-BHLOC/ARD MHACHA NATIONAL H-BLOCK/ARMAGH COMMITTEE

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25 April 1981

## 56th. Day of Hunger Strike

Statement from Bobby Sands M.P.

I did not request at any time, for the Commission to investigate the demands of the political prisoners in the H Blocks and Armagh. I dismissed the first suggestion by Joe Hume of their intervention as ridiculous. Later I said, on the 23rd April, that the case is cut and dried. The Republican political prisoners will not compulsorily wear British prison clothing or compulsorily carry out work for the British prison administration. We wish to have association with each other within the confines of the prison.

Despite this, and my lack of confidence in the Commission, I stated that I was prepared to meet any European commissioners provided advisors chosen by me and a representative of the protesting prisoners were present.

These facilities were denied me. The legal submission and request to the European Commission was made in good faith by my sister Marcella who was misled by Charles Haughey into believing that the Commission would deliver on the protesting prisoners. Mr Haughey lead my family to believe that the British Government wanted a way out of the dilemma in which they now find themselves, and that the Commission's intervention was the vehicle for getting the British off the H-Block/Armagh hook.

Because Mr. Haughey gave similar assurances to the confused ending of the last hunger strike, because he has in fact the means to put pressure, and to call publically on Britain to end the H-Block/Armagh crises and has consistently refused to do so, I viewed his prompting of my family as a cynical and a coldblooded manipulation of people

clearly vulnerable to this type of pressure.

The Commission's intervention has been diversionary and has served to aid British attempts to confuse the issue. The issue is basic and fundamental. Four Republican political prisoners are on hunger strike on behalf of their 440 protesting comrades here in the H-Blocks and Armagh. Our demands are reasonable and just. We are on hunger strike and are prepared to die for them.

One of my comrades Frankie Hughes is in a steadily deteriorating condition, I am on the 56th day of hunger strike, Patsy O Hara and Raymond McCreesh are on the 35th day of hunger strike.

Now that the Commission discussion is out of the way, and that the confusion deliberately created by its intervention, has cleared, we the political prisoners call once again for the people to support our demands.

The British Government has the ways and the means to concede them, until they do the hunger strike continues.

Signed,

Bobby Sands M.P.  
Prison Hospital,  
Long Kesh.