

## NATIONAL ARCHIVES

### IRELAND



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*Dept*

20 October, 1971

I have received a reply to the letter that you handed to me yesterday evening about the allegation of maltreatment of internees. The substance of it is as follows: I do not of course need to remind you that allegations of brutality are part of the stock-in-trade of the I.R.A. The British Government have stated, and this has most recently been confirmed by Mr. Maudling in the House of Commons, that all allegations are to be investigated by the Compton Committee.

There are some further considerations. The European Commission on Human Rights normally examine petitions from individuals which have to be studied with the supporting evidence. On previous occasions petitioners from Northern Ireland have laid petitions before the Commission, but only in the form of general allegations for which they have provided no supporting evidence. In these circumstances my Government hope that the Irish Government would prefer to wait and study very carefully the findings of the Compton Committee in each case before they take up a position which could bring them into open dispute with the British Government, particularly if it was on the basis of allegations which might later prove to be unfounded.

I earnestly hope that on the basis of this reply it will not prove necessary to say more in public at the present time than that in the first instance the findings of the Compton Committee in each case will need to be most carefully studied.

John Peck

H.J. McCann, Esq.,  
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