

FONIO 01/26

PP NIO BELFAST

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PO
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Mr England
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2/1/76

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

TO PRIORITY CERTAIN POSTS AND MISSIONS TELNO. GUIDANCE 18 OF 22 JANUARY 76.

FRANK STAGG.

1. THE HOME OFFICE HAS RECEIVED A VOLUME OF CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE UNITED STATES ABOUT FRANK STAGG, A PRISONER ON HUNGER STRIKE IN WAKEFIELD PRISON, YORKSHIRE. STAGG'S CONDITION IS NOW VERY SERIOUS AND THE HOME SECRETARY HAS APPROVED THE TEXT IN PARA.3 BELOW TO BE ISSUED IN THE EVENT OF HIS DEATH.

2. INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE.

THE FACTUAL INFORMATION CONTAINED IN PARA.3 MAY BE DRAWN UPON UNATTRIBUTABLY WHILE STAGG REMAINS ALIVE. PARA.4 MAY BE USED FREELY.

BEGINS:

3. FRANCIS STAGG, 34, DIED IN HOSPITAL IN WAKEFIELD PRISON, YORKSHIRE TODAY. THE CORONER AND NEXT-OF-KIN HAVE BEEN INFORMED.

STAGG WAS SENTENCED AT BIRMINGHAM CROWN COURT ON 1ST NOVEMBER 1973, TO TEN YEARS FOR CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT ARSON AND CRIMINAL DAMAGE.

STAGG HAD BEEN REFUSING FOOD SINCE 13TH DECEMBER LAST YEAR. ON 15TH DECEMBER HE WAS WARNED THAT THE CONSEQUENT AND INEVITABLE DETERIORATION IN HIS HEALTH WOULD BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE WITHOUT MEDICAL INTERVENTION UNLESS HE SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED IT. THIS WAS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRACTICE OUTLINED BY THE HOME SECRETARY IN JULY 1974. ON 19TH DECEMBER HE WAS TRANSFERRED TO THE PRISON HOSPITAL WHERE HE CONTINUED TO RECEIVE MEDICAL SUPERVISION AND ADVICE AND FOOD WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO HIM. STAGG REFUSED ALL CO-OPERATION WITH THE MEDICAL STAFF UNTIL 19 JANUARY WHEN HE ALLOWED HIMSELF TO BE PHYSICALLY EXAMINED. HE CONTINUED TO REFUSE FOOD. SINCE HE BECAME DANGEROUSLY ILL VISITS HAVE BEEN UNLIMITED.

'STAGG SAID THAT HE REFUSED FOOD IN SUPPORT OF A REQUEST TO BE MOVED TO A PRISON IN NORTHERN IRELAND WHERE HE WOULD HAVE 'POLITICAL STATUS'. HE WAS REPEATEDLY TOLD THAT 'POLITICAL STATUS' IS NOT RECOGNISED IN BRITISH PRISONS AND THAT, APART FROM OTHER CONSIDERATIONS, AS HE HAD NO KNOWN ASSOCIATIONS WITH NORTHERN IRELAND - HE HAD BEEN BORN IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND AND HAD LIVED IN COVENTRY SINCE 1959 - THERE WAS NO BASIS FOR A TRANSFER TO NORTHERN IRELAND. HE WAS HOWEVER TOLD THAT A TRANSFER TO ANOTHER PRISON NEARER TO HIS WIFE AND HIS HOME AT COVENTRY WOULD BE POSSIBLE ONCE HE WAS WELL ENOUGH.
ENDS

4. ANOTHER IRISH PRISONER, JEREMIAH MEALEY, IS ALSO ON HUNGER STRIKE WITH STAGG IN WAKEFIELD PRISON. HIS CONDITION IS MUCH LESS SERIOUS. HIS MOTIVE FOR REFUSAL OF FOOD IS ALSO A WISH TO BE TRANSFERRED TO NORTHERN IRELAND. HE HAS LIVED IN THIS COUNTRY FOR SEVENTEEN YEARS.

CALLAGHAN

NNNNP

SENT AT 26/1214Z CEM

RECD AT 26/1214Z NFR