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SECRETARY OF STATE  
FOR  
NORTHERN IRELAND

The Rt Hon Lord Carrington KCMG MC  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
LONDON SW1

31 July 1981

*Dear Peter,*

MINISTERIAL VISITS TO THE UNITED STATES DURING SEPTEMBER

Several of our Ministerial colleagues are planning to visit the United States before the end of September. I suggest that if the hunger strikes in Northern Ireland are continuing when their visits take place, it will be necessary to let them have some up to date briefing shortly before departure. The Washington Embassy can of course brief them as necessary thereafter. This would be in addition to the material which Francis Pym circulated under cover of his letter of 11 June. I know that you yourself are making such a visit and will of course be fully briefed on this issue.

As you are aware, we face particular difficulties in putting our message across in certain quarters in the United States, notably among Irish Americans, and I am sure you and Francis Pym will agree that our colleagues should take any suitable opportunities to explain the Government's policies on Northern Ireland in general and on the hunger strikes in particular. If the hunger strikes persist, I should be grateful if our colleagues visiting America would get in touch with my office a week or so before their departure so that we can consider what additional material to offer.

I am copying this letter to Geoffrey Howe, John Biffen, Kenneth Younger, Nicholas Edwards, Douglas Hurd and Tim Raison (all of whom plan to visit the United States before the end of September), and to Francis Pym. A copy also goes to No 10 for information.

*Yours ever*

*Humphrey*



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