

McEldowney, Eugene. (1981). Comments by John Hume renewing a plea to the British government to resolve the Maze Hunger-Strike, (comments reported in a newspaper article by Eugene McEldowney), *The Irish Times*, (22 August 1981): ... [23938] - [Newspaper Article]

The election result [in Fermanagh and South Tyrone] was a straightforward expression of anti-Thatcher feeling in the constituency.

My consistent position has been that the British Government must take steps to resolve the crisis before any genuine rational political debate could take place within the North.

The situation was not one simply of prison conditions but contained political and psychological problems. Political because of the polarising effect which the hunger-strike was having on the whole community, and psychological in the prisoners were dying as much out of solidarity with each other as anything else.

Political pragmatism if nothing else demanded that the British Government should act to end the prison protest.

The simple way to do this would be to send a representative into the prison on their behalf to talk to the prisoners who were in British Government custody. They could use the prisoners' statements of July 5th and August 6th as a basis for their discussion.

He had told the British Prime Minister that the cost of inaction would be far greater than the cost of action and that his forecast had since proved to be tragically true.