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The Government welcome the inclusion in the statement issued today of the expression by the British Government of their willingness to discuss the humanitarian aspects of the prison administration in Northern Ireland with anyone who shares their concern about it. As it is the Government's view that it is along these lines that a solution can be reached they express the hope that this offer will be taken up and pursued as a matter of urgency.

The Government believe that it is in the interests of the peace and security of all the people of this island that a way out of the present situation should be found and they again indicate that they are ready to give their support to any moves which would offer reasonable hope of achieving a solution.

4 December 1980