



CONFIDENTIAL

demands and be boosted in their activities. It seemed as if there was nothing that could be done to affect the extremists and their opinions, but the Secretary of State felt that the ordinary people were at risk since they may well be influenced by those opinions. It was necessary to stop that happening which was the reason for meeting the Church leaders who would be able to put the facts before their congregations.

3. Rev Callaghan agreed that there should be no yielding on the question of political status. Murder was murder, it could not be excused. There had to be standards by which a community was to be governed, ie the decalogue. He added that he had no "vested interest" in the subject, in that there were no Methodists involved in the protest. He went on to talk about the difficulty in getting the Government's message across to the people of Ireland since the southerners were so different from the northerners in that they displayed a romanticism to the point of ruthlessness. He further believed that the hunger strikers would fast to death. When asked how the Government should handle the situation Rev Callaghan suggested that Government Ministers should meet Churchmen and community leaders around the Province in order to explain the facts. The Secretary of State agreed with the principle of this idea but believed that it would be better and more simply done through the Church leaders themselves. Rev Callaghan wondered whether it would be possible for the four Church leaders to make a joint visit to the H Blocks. He thought Cardinal OFiaich was caught on a hook and should be given the chance of moving to a more reasonable position. The Secretary of State thought the application for such a visit would be received with the greatest sympathy.

4. The Secretary of State gave Rev Callaghan several copies of "H Blocks, the Facts" and thanked him for his support. Rev Callaghan's immediate impression of the pamphlet was that it was in the

CONFIDENTIAL

language of the Times and Guardian rather than that of the Sun and therefore might not get popular appeal.

*Jonathan Margetts*  
JONATHAN MARGETTS  
Private Secretary

13 November 1980

Distribution:

PS/S of S (B & L) ✓  
PS/Mr Alison (B & L)  
PS/PUS (B & L) ✓  
Mr Blelloch ✓  
Mr Barry ✓  
Mr Wyatt ✓  
Mr Gilliland ✓  
Mr Buxton ✓  
Mr Gee ✓

CONFIDENTIAL