

19 MAR 1981

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E. R.

PAB/7975/KG

INFO. POLICY AND POL. AFFAIRS / Skh
 19 MAR 1981
 cc: REFER PS/PUS (B & L)
 Mr Blelloch
 Mr Moriarty
 Miss MacGlashan
 Mr Chesterton

Mr Wyatt

HUNGER STRIKE: SDLP VIEW

At Mr Blelloch's dinner for Sir Leonard Figg last night I asked Eddie McGrady, the SDLP Chief Whip, how he assessed views on the hunger strike in the Catholic community. He confirmed our impression that so far interest was slight: people did not sympathise with the strikers' aim and had already been through it all before Christmas. Nevertheless, he warned that hunger strikes inevitably produced a gut reaction in the Catholic community and that as time went on and the strikers began to weaken there could be a considerable rise in temperature. If this coincided with further activity by Mr Paisley, there could be an inter-reacting escalation of feelings on both sides in the awkward run-up to the May elections.



D E S BLATHERWICK
 Political Affairs Division

19 March 1981

Muri
 Cc Mr Palmer
 Barry
 Malone

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