

MODBA FROM MAP

CONFIDENTIAL

*Included*

I warned Tim on the telephone earlier today that there were developments over Dolores Price. Mr. Atkins has now decided that in accordance with medical advice, she must be freed. Theoretically, there is an alternative of discharging her to a civilian hospital where she could be kept under guard. But the doctors are saying that her anorexia will only be cured in conditions of freedom. Mr. Atkins has therefore decided to go ahead with release, and intends to make this public and put it into effect later tomorrow afternoon. Timing will depend on other factors, including the timing of a visit of Irish Members of Parliament to Bobby Sands in the Maze.

The Prime Minister has apparently been sympathetic over this case, and in a recent letter to Cardinal O'Faich, indicated that the case would be kept under constant review.

Grateful for confirmation that the Prime Minister would not wish to intervene in Mr. Atkins' decision.

19 April, 1981