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10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

26 August 1981

Dear Mr. Carron,

Thank you for your telegram seeking an urgent meeting to discuss the situation in the Northern Ireland prisons. I am glad that as a democratically elected representative of electors in Northern Ireland, you are pursuing these difficult problems through the democratic channels. This is the only way in which these matters can be addressed, and I hope that, now that you are elected, you will join in condemning violence.

In view of your desire for an urgent meeting I must ask you, as I so often ask Members of Parliament, to approach the Departmental Minister concerned. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Mr. Humphrey Atkins, is himself away on holiday, but his deputy, Mr. Michael Alison, is ready to make an early appointment to see you; his office will be making contact with you for this purpose.

Mr. Alison will of course give me and Mr. Atkins a full account of the meeting. I know that he would find it helpful if, in advance of the meeting, you could let him have a note of the points that you wish to discuss.

In view of the importance of this subject, I am releasing the text of this letter to the Press.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

Owen Carron, Esq., M.P.

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