

From JAMES H. MOLYNEAUX, J.P., M.P. for Antrim, South.

cc 76  
MODBA



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

13 January, 1981.

*Dear Prime Minister*

The Ulster Unionist Council which met on Saturday, 10 January, 1981, invited me to convey to you their views on three issues.

The delegates expressed warm appreciation of your forthright reply to me in the House on 18 December on the Maze prison issue. As you rightly said, granting any form of political status to people who have committed murder and other terrible crimes puts at risk the lives of many innocent men, women and children. The Council looks to you urgently to bring to an end as soon as possible the existing political status in the Maze prison.

Secondly, the Council endorsed my letter to you, dated 10 December, 1980, on the subject of the Dublin summit and unanimously urged that no study groups should be established unless and until the six subjects set out in my letter are accepted at the head of the agenda by the Government of the Irish Republic. In our view the "unique relationship" referred to in the joint communique is unique only in the sense that the Irish Republic continues to assert its claim to a part of the territory of the United Kingdom. So long as that claim is maintained, it is quite intolerable that the proposed study groups should purport to be finding ways to make relations between the United Kingdom and the Republic closer.

Finally, the Council is appalled by the proposal of the Democratic Unionist Party that Northern Ireland's constitutional future should be decided by a referendum in Great Britain from which Ulster electors would be excluded but in which citizens of the Irish Republic would be permitted to vote.

The Council wishes you to know that it will not weaken or abandon the principle, which you yourself have so firmly reasserted, that Ulster's membership of the United Kingdom is a matter wholly in the hands of the people of the province and cannot be changed or dissolved against their will.

*Yours ever  
Jim*

The Right Honourable Mrs Margaret Thatcher, MP.,  
10 Downing Street,  
London, SW1.