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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

25 March, 1981.

Dear Roy,

Anglo/Irish Joint Studies

As you are no doubt aware, Ian Gow wrote privately to your Secretary of State on 18 February about a... PQ which Mr. Enoch Powell had it in mind to put to the Prime Minister on the Anglo/Irish joint studies.

Mr. Powell has now returned to the charge. He is thinking of putting the following Question to the Prime Minister tomorrow:-

"Is the Prime Minister able to tell the House how many subjects have been authorised for discussion by the Anglo/Irish Study Groups, and what those subjects are?"

It is possible that Mr. Powell would be willing to delay his question a little if the Prime Minister thought that the proposed timing was not right.

My own feeling is that it would not be right to try to prevent Mr. Powell putting his Question, but <sup>that</sup> we should indicate that it would be very helpful if the Question were delayed until, say, Thursday, 2 April. If Mr. Powell does then catch the Speaker's eye, it might be helpful if the Prime Minister were able to reply along the following lines:-

"As both the Dublin Communique and my own statements to the House have made clear, five subjects are being discussed - citizenship rights, security matters, economic cooperation, measures to encourage mutual understanding, and possible new institutional structures."

I should be grateful for urgent advice.

I am sending copies of this letter to Roderic Lyne (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely

Richard Alexander

Roy Harrington, Esq.,  
Northern Ireland Office.

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