



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 November 1983

Mr Ian Paisley

Thank you for your letter of 7 November which was co-signed by your Parliamentary Party colleagues.

The Government's position on the fundamental question of Northern Ireland's status as a part of the United Kingdom is absolutely clear. The Joint Studies, the work of the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Council since then, and my discussions with Dr. FitzGerald are all entirely consistent with that position and do not undermine it in any way. Your suggestion that they are somehow intended to "ease and tease" Northern Ireland out of the United Kingdom is completely without foundation.

The recent exchanges with the Government of the Republic are normal aspects of dealings between neighbouring friendly States with a number of common interests.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

The Reverend Dr. Ian Paisley, M.P.

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