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QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

24 July 1984

*2 Jim,*

*PH has already  
consented.  
CDP 24/7.*

DEROGATIONS FROM INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS

Thank you for your letter of 3 July giving your response to the recent report of the inter-departmental Working Group of officials. My initial reaction is, like yours, very sympathetic towards dispensing with these derogations. Whilst they are in existence not only does the United Kingdom stand in bad company as you mention, but it also casts doubt upon our traditional championship of human rights, bearing in mind that other countries - particularly those in the Communist bloc - do not bother to enter derogations.

I would only add that I hope if we are to drop these derogations we can do so in toto. The 'soldier's powers of arrest' is, of course, an issue primarily for you and Michael Heseltine; but were we to preserve a derogation to take account of it - and hence draw attention to it - we might well lose the advantage gained by dropping the other derogations. In this connection I very much agree with Michael Havers that we will need to look very carefully at the presentation of the decision to withdraw our notices.

I am copying this to the Prime Minister, Geoffrey Howe, Michael Heseltine, George Younger, Quintin Hailsham, Kenneth Cameron, Michael Havers and Sir Robert Armstrong.

*2 am,  
am*

The Rt Hon James Prior, MP

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EVAs for Human Rights

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