



10 DOWNING STREET

JH  
7/11

4th November 1983

Dear Jim,

I am writing to apologise for the fact that a letter which the Prime Minister wrote to you on 31st October, concerning the meeting between her and Dr Fitzgerald, appeared in the Press before you had actually received the letter.

When letters written by the Prime Minister are to be issued to the Press, the office here goes to great lengths to ensure that sufficient time is allowed for the original letter to reach the addressee before publication is made.

However, in this instance, I fear that an error crept in because the Prime Minister's letter was sent to you at your address in Ireland (from where you had written to her), while the Press Office here assumed that the reply had in fact been sent to you at the House of Commons. Therefore, the extra time which should have been allowed to take account of posting the letter to Ireland rather than delivering it in London was not accounted for, and publication went ahead.

Once again, I apologise for this error on our part.

Yours ever  
Michael

MICHAEL ALISON

James H Molyneaux Esq JP MP