

CONFIDENTIAL



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

4 February 1994

Dear David,

LETTER TO THE TAOISEACH

I believe the Northern Ireland Office told you that the Prime Minister would shortly be writing to the Taoiseach. The shifting sands this week have delayed the final draft, but the letter is now attached. I should be grateful if you could deliver it as soon as possible, to a suitable intermediary (?Mansergh).

Could you suggest that Mansergh or Butler should contact me fairly early next week to discuss the logistics of a meeting on 19 February?

*Yours ever,
Roderic.*

RODERIC LYNE

His Excellency Mr. D. E. S. Blatherwick, C.M.G., O.B.E.

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10 DOWNING STREET
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THE PRIME MINISTER

4 February 1994

Dear Albert,

I am glad that Patrick Mayhew and Dick Spring had the chance of a thorough discussion on 28 January. This was a good time to take stock.

As the days pass, it becomes harder to sustain optimism about the eventual response of the Provisionals and Sinn Fein to the Joint Declaration. We have both shown patience and restraint, and have kept the door open. To the extent that an internal debate may be continuing within Sinn Fein, this must be the right line. But Gerry Adams said nothing in the United States to encourage the thought that they will shortly give up violence. I see that you warned on 2 February that it was time we had a decision. I entirely agree.

We should not be thought to be waiting on Sinn Fein, or holding up progress while they come to a decision. As I feared, the New York visit was a heaven-sent opportunity for Adams to try to undermine the Joint Declaration and to relieve the pressure on Sinn Fein to accept it. It has done a lot of damage, and the Administration must be regretting their decision to let him in. We now need to regain the initiative, and to demonstrate once again that our two Governments are working hand in glove to carry our initiative forward.

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I therefore think it particularly important to give fresh impetus to the political dialogue involving the constitutional parties. I welcome your own call for an early resumption of the political Talks. We have always agreed that the Talks complement the Declaration. To make a reality of this, we should look for early progress across all three strands.

Patrick Mayhew and Dick Spring agreed on 28 January that there should now be intensive contacts between our officials. I hope you will agree that they should be asked rapidly to develop a framework to assist in the talks process. As Patrick Mayhew explained to Dick Spring, he intends to float privately some notions on where, in all three strands, the Talks so far have indicated a measure of agreement. This will be a basis for identifying the areas where more work is required.

I am sure that it would be useful for you and me to compare notes fairly soon, preferably in a way which would not attract too much attention. As luck would have it, the rugby international at Twickenham on 19 February looks like a good opportunity, and good timing. I gather that you are likely to come over for the game. The RFU have also invited me. I hope that we can find an hour or so before or after the game for a chat.

If you would like to do this, I shall ask Roderic Lyne to be in touch with your office to work out the most convenient arrangement.

Yours Ever,
John

Mr Albert Reynolds TD