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4 February 1996,

Rt. Hon John Major MP,
The Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
LONDON SW1

During the past few years influence in Washington DC has been essential for the success of the Peace Process. I have tried to do all possible to ensure a more balanced appreciation of the Northern Ireland situation amongst opinion formers there, and I hope, with some modest success. In this I would have found it almost impossible to function without the enormous assistance of a Northern Ireland man who is now living and working there. His name is Michael McDowell. He is coming to the end of his time as the Assistant Director of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation bureau in Washington DC, and intends to move out of journalism into a foreign policy think tank, but I would be very grateful if you would consider him for a recognition in the up-coming Honours list.

He for many years assisted the cause of Northern Ireland through the Northern Ireland Partnership in Canada and in Washington, but in recent years he has spent quite enormous amounts of time, and his own personal resources, helping those of us who have been trying to bring a more balanced view on 'the Hill'. It is not only through advice, introductions, and arrangements, but through almost daily faxes and messages, by which I have been kept informed of White House activities, and able to respond. He has also been important in using his influence to persuade the Ulster Unionists to be more proactive in their attitude to the USA. He is well known to our Embassy and the Irish Embassy in Washington, and also to senior people here like David Fell, and I feel strongly that the professional risks that he has taken, and the sacrificial commitment he has shown to helping in the peace process deserves recognition.

I would be grateful if you would give this matter your consideration.

Yours sincerely,