



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

24 March 1994

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Dear Albert,

I am glad that we had the chance of a word on the telephone before your visit to the United States. Our statement helped to steady the situation then. I hope that you enjoyed your trip. It was well timed. I am sure it was salutary for you to spell out so clearly the importance of a permanent cessation of violence.

We are clearly now in choppy waters, which will be no great surprise to either of us. I am not quite sure where the Provisionals intend to go from here, but on present evidence it looks as if it will be some time before they come to their senses. Their recent spate of attacks both in Northern Ireland and here has been ominous, and we shall have to show them very firmly that continued terrorism will bring no advantage.

We also, of course, need to do all that we can to make life as difficult as possible for the men of violence from both sides. The most encouraging aspect of the security picture has been the growing cooperation and better understanding between the police and the security authorities on either side of the border. Your extradition legislation is another welcome example of our common determination to defeat terrorism. The Working Group which you and I set up under Tim Dalton and John Chilcot has been making steady progress, and I know that they are planning further meetings for next month. I think it

would be helpful to them if you and I had a look together at the fruits of their labours and did a little brain-storming about where to go from here. This could give the Working Group added impetus. Perhaps the best way of organising this would be to ask the Group to produce a report which you and I could then discuss.

It would be equally useful to take stock soon of the broad political situation. I know that Dick Spring and Patrick Mayhew are trying to put together a shared understanding of what might prove acceptable to all the participants as an outcome of the Talks process. At the same time, we are continuing our bilateral talks with the constitutional parties (and you will have seen press accounts of my lively discussion with Paisley and the DUP on 21 March). I cannot pretend that the shadow of the European Parliamentary elections is making our task easier; but I think it is vital to sustain the political momentum, and to demonstrate that we are not going to wait for those outside the process to come in.

I think this means that we shall not be short of things to discuss if we can find time to get together informally, in the period after Easter, on the lines which we discussed. Perhaps you could let me know if this matches your thinking. We might then put our offices to work on a time and a place.

I look forward to seeing you soon.

Yours Ever,
Alan H.

Mr. Albert Reynolds, T.D.