

The Rt. Hon. Michael Heseltine MP
President of the Board of Trade

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Secretary of State
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35 copies

- ① original
- ② Mr Stephens PS/ML lre Sec.
- ③ this copy
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- ⑤ Mr Hoop

5 October 1993

Dear Dr O'Connell,

Thank you for your letter of 1 September to Mr Heseltine. I am sorry not to have been able to reply sooner. I did try to telephone you at the numbers you provided in your letter but two of them are for facsimiles while I could not get any answer on the third.

Mr Heseltine has not yet returned to the office following his illness. I have also not been sending any official correspondence to him. He has therefore not been able to consider your letter personally.

As you know, the Government's longstanding policy is not to talk to or negotiate with those who use or support violence, nor will it authorise intermediaries to conduct such talks or negotiations on its behalf. I am clear that Mr Heseltine would not wish to countenance any departure from this policy. I am also sure that he would not want you to feel under any responsibility to act as an intermediary yourself. If, however, you did wish to pursue matters further then I can only suggest that you approach our Ambassador in Dublin.

I am sorry not to have been able to send a reply on behalf of Mr Heseltine himself but in the circumstances I am sure you will understand.

Yours sincerely,
P J Smith

P J SMITH
Principal Private Secretary

JW10011

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