

Dr. John O'Connell  
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London SW 1W 8 UG

1 September 1993

*Dear Michael,*

I was very sorry to learn of your illness, and I trust you are recovering rapidly. As I told you I suffered a similar attack which necessitated my resigning as Minister for Health and member of the Irish Parliament.

You may remember I mentioned to you that there was a great likelihood of a permanent peace in Northern Ireland, if your Government would consider having talks with "friends" of the IRA.

I know your Government has set its heart against talking with terrorists, but this latest dramatic announcement by the Israeli Government that they are about to reach agreement with the terrorist organisation the PLO should make your Government rethink its position on this question.

Government officials meeting "friends" of the IRA would not compromise your Government, and I am assured such talks would be very fruitful and could lead to an early ceasefire and lasting peace.

The present stalemate can only lead to further bloodshed in the tragedy that is Northern Ireland.

I have had private talks with the two loyalist organisations, the UVF and the UFF and I am confident that they will respond positively.

You may wonder why I am so persistent but having talked to the parties concerned I am convinced an initiative by your Government now would bring about the peace we all so desperately desire. In addition I am assured that absolute confidentiality would be guaranteed.

I shall be in Dublin until next Wednesday Sept 8 and I would earnestly ask you to discuss it with Mr. Major. My phone number in Dublin is 6606454 or 4757461. My London number is 071-730-1728.

Trusting to hear from you.

*Kindest regards*

*John O'Connell*  
Dr. John O'Connell