

Oifig an Taoisigh  
Office of the Taoiseach

7 September, 1993.

The Right Honourable John Major, M.P.,  
Prime Minister,  
10 Downing Street.

PERSONAL AND SECRET

DEAR JOHN,

I have been giving serious thought during the holidays to the report I had on the Nally/Butler meeting on 4th August. There are one or two points I think I should emphasise to you personally before their next meeting takes place later this week.

First, I would like you to know beyond equivocation or doubt that the paper which the two sides have been discussing is a paper which we have worked on here long and hard. As I think has been mentioned at earlier meetings, the proposals have my own personal backing and inputs: and it has the backing so far as we can ascertain, through our intermediaries, of those who can produce peace - on their side at least.

Peace would be an achievement worth striving for: after 24 years of violence, it would be on a par with the achievement of any of our predecessors in this century - in fact, a truly historic breakthrough. There are risks, but peace is within our reach if we play our cards right. The principle of consent, on which you laid so much emphasis earlier is not an issue. The nationalist proponents now fully accept the idea, subject to the sort of framework we have set out in the paper.

What we are all hoping to achieve is not necessarily Irish unity or anything in that area, within any limited timescale, but a period of stability, without violence or the threat of violence in which both sides can put past bitterness behind them and work out an agreement on their future rationally and equitably. Peace which could result from the present process could transform the current climate and make that outcome not only possible but probable, certainly over the medium-term.





Oifig an Taoisigh  
Office of the Taoiseach

-2-

I would therefore, ask you in all sincerity to continue to give the process your full and enthusiastic backing so that your people and mine can, together, work on the paper so as in the end to produce this result, which I am sure the people of our two countries so devoutly wish for. I would hope that it would be possible for us to agree the terms of an understanding at our next meeting. Time is not on our side.

If the Arabs and Israelis can do it, why can't we?

Very Best Wishes,  
C. Hill.

(Kind Regards to Norma)