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10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

1 August 1994

Dear Albert,

I don't suppose that either of us was greatly surprised at the outcome of Sinn Fein's conference a week ago - but I do feel very disappointed. Whatever some people may say, we should not abandon the Joint Declaration, or the offer to Sinn Fein of a place in political life when violence ends for good. On the other hand, their failure to make any significant moves in the direction of peace over the past half year makes it all the more important to show that we are moving ahead without waiting for them.

We must show, too, that violence is not the only game in town, especially after the recent series of attacks, including the mortar attack on Newry Police Station.

The best possible response from us would be to come up with a Joint Framework Document in the autumn. Failure in that exercise would be seen as a victory for those attacking the peace process from the extremes. I understand that John Chilcot and Martin Mansergh are going to stay in touch in the next few weeks. On the problem of Articles 2 and 3, I still think that it boils down to a pretty straightforward question or two. We won't ever convince the Unionists to go along with a settlement unless it is clear to all (without recourse to complicated legal arguments) that you have unequivocally removed the territorial claim over Northern Ireland; and recognised, de jure and de facto, the legitimacy of British rule there for as long as this remains the wish of a

majority of the people. What John and Martin need to do is to find words that are not open to any misinterpretation.

I hope that you feel the same. Let's show the Provisionals that we are not waiting for them, and that they need to think again very hard about continuing violence if they want to avoid ever-deepening isolation.

Unless we move forward, we shall do a disservice to those who have chosen to follow the democratic and constitutional path.

I hope August will give you a chance to relax, and look forward to seeing you again in the autumn.

Yours Ever,
John



Mr. Albert Reynolds, T.D.