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cc 15/595 (a) c. f. ...  
 Mr Bloomfield M  
 Mr Brennan 2 Pol 2  
 Mr Andrews M  
 Mr Giddens  
 Mr Gilleland M  
 Mr Lennigan M  
 Mr Chester M  
 2 April 1986  
 Mr Bell  
 Mrs White  
 Mr McConnell M  
 Mr S. Smith M  
 Mr Wood  
 Mr Chapman



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
 LONDON SW1A 0AA



DS&S to see

Dear Prime Minister

It is apparent that there are profound differences in our perceptions of the functions and purpose of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. No useful purpose would be served at this time by detailed discussion of our respective views.

Your assertion that you are committed to and will not suspend the operation of the Agreement precludes the requisite degree of flexibility necessary in the circumstances.

We are disappointed that you have studiously avoided addressing the substance of the proposals placed before you. The request for reasons why the quality of our British Citizenship should be different from that enjoyed in the rest of the United Kingdom is not answered by alleging that to protest about such inequality is to deny the sovereignty of Parliament. We find no acknowledgement of the positive suggestions for a two stage conference to discuss both devolved government and the future relationship of any devolved government with the Governments in London and Dublin.

We have difficulty in appreciating how a conference on devolved government entered into with the Agreement still in operation cannot be seen as other than conforming with the devolution provision in the Agreement itself. A conference on those terms would be nothing less than acceptance of the Agreement. The SDLP has of course a pre-condition for discussing devolution - it is the continued operation of the Agreement about whose terms they were closely consulted.

We are of course anxious to find a way out of the present impasse, but the terms of your letter and the presumptive statements of some of your Cabinet colleagues badly rejects consultation in favour of confrontation.

We are still even at this stage anxious to have your views on our positive proposals which remain unanswered.

Yours ever

Timothy ...

Tim R K ...