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1 March 1988

Rt Hon Tom King PC MP
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland
Northern Ireland Office
Whitehall
London SW1A 2AZ

Dear Tom

I expect your staff will have shown you the letter (copy attached) in today's Independent from an Irish senator. This seems to me a devastating indictment of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, demonstrating as it does the totally differing attitudes of the two Governments towards the Accord and the obvious willingness of Charles Haughey to take and never give.

The senator also points out the failure of the Agreement to curb acts of violence in Ulster which, instead of diminishing, have actually increased.

I have seen no suggestion that your own enthusiasm for the Agreement has diminished.

Would you be willing to give some reassurance to doubters by pledging that if violence has not decreased in, say, the next-two years, and should you still be Ulster Secretary, you will offer your resignation?

I should say that your response will be considered as available for publication, unless you specifically forbid it.

You can also help us in one other matter:-

In the Financial Times last month, the former Taoiseach, Dr Garret Fitzgerald alleged that your Government has had direct dealings with the IRA.

Could you provide me with an unqualified denial?

Kindest regards.

Yours sincerely


Ronald Spark
Chief Leader Writer