



*Chuntai - Secretary may wish to see, and return to me please.
Rehant 22/11*

Mc → SIL for SAS

Bishop's House
St. Eugene's Cathedral
Derry BT48 9AP
Ireland

Tel. Derry 262302 (STD CODE 0504)

November 19, 1985

Mr. Tom King, M.P.,
Secretary of State for N.I.,
Northern Ireland Office,
Stormont Castle,
BELFAST BT4 3ST.

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Dear Mr. King,

Please accept my sincere thanks and congratulations on the signing of the Anglo-Irish agreement. I feel that it is a magnificent and historic achievement. I am grateful to you for sending me a personal copy of the Agreement.

I have studied the document very carefully. I believe that this agreement has the potential of being a major step forward for the nationalist community in the North. It is our first real ray of hope for many years. To my mind, it is a development of major significance for both communities here. I had to attend several functions here in Derry and in Donegal in the past few days. In the course of those days, I met a large number of people, ordinary people of all ages, from the nationalist community here in Derry and in Donegal and indeed, some people who would have unionist views and, all of them, without exception, young and old, were pleased with the agreement. In recent years, many young people here had become cynical about the political process and about constitutional politics generally. I hope that the developments of coming months will rekindle their faith in the political process and demonstrate to them that the hard long slog of constitutional politics can deliver. That is the only sure way of defeating the IRA and those who espouse violence.

I have been under considerable pressure from media people in the last few days to comment on the Anglo-Irish agreement. I am reluctant to make any public comment, lest any enthusiastic endorsement by a Catholic bishop might be interpreted in the wrong way by some of the unionist community here. If I were to react publicly, it would have to be with enthusiasm. I do not wish to add to your problems. That is why I prefer to remain silent for the time being and to convey my personal gratitude and appreciation to you and your colleagues by this letter. You will have noticed that the Irish Catholic Bishops issued a low key statement yesterday welcoming the signing of the Agreement and wishing it success. The Bishops I have spoken to in recent days are enthusiastic about it.

The next few months will be highly sensitive and extremely difficult especially for those engaged in the Conference and Secretariat. I can assure you of my support and prayers in your continuing efforts in implementing the agreement.

With kindest good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

+ Edmund Daly
Bishop of Derry