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NIT APS

Pl Hk to 4 sig.  
John 5/9.

Edward Oakden Esq  
PS/Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON  
SW1

3rd September 1996

Dear Mr Oakden

The Dublin Embassy has passed a copy of an invitation to the Prime Minister sent by The Law Society of the University College Dublin to speak at a debate on Northern Ireland arranged for 14 November. Identical invitations have been sent to my Secretary of State and Michael Ancram.

Michael Ancram will accept his invitation and will speak at the debate on 14 November. The Secretary of State will turn down his invitation and it is recommended that the Prime Minister does so as well. A draft regrets letter to The Law Society is attached.

In addition, the Secretary of State agreed some time ago to participate in a debate organised by The Literary and Historical Society of UCD on 25 October. We are separately considering whether he should also address The Influential Institute of European Affairs later on this year. This is The Republic's most prestigious forum for the discussion of Irish policy.

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In general we are looking to make more of Ministers' visits to Dublin, particularly in ensuring that they receive maximum coverage in the Irish media.

I am copying this letter to William Ehrman (FCO).

*Yours sincerely*

ARLENE NEILL  
Diary Secretary (B)

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DRAFT LETTER FOR SIGNATURE BY PS/PRIME MINISTER

Valerie Shaw  
Treasurer  
The Law Society  
Student Consultative  
University College  
Dublin 4

September 1996

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for the invitation to attend your debate on Northern Ireland scheduled for 14 November.

*I am afraid the Prime Minister will not be able to accept himself.*  
He is unable to accept. ~~However, he~~ has asked me to pass on ~~but~~  
his best wishes for an enjoyable evening.

*I understand  
that  
Michael  
Annam  
may be  
able to  
do so.*

*The  
Prime  
Minister*

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