

FILE

**From: EDWARD OAKDEN**  
**Date: 22 August 1996**

**MISS Warburton (O/R)**

**cc: MR HOLMES (O/R)**  
**MR HASLAM (O/R)**  
**MRS CLEAVER (O/R)**

I have copied to you separately Sam Sharpe's letter to me of 20 August asking if the Prime Minister would be prepared to see a group of Irish journalists on their way either to or from a meeting of the British-Irish Inter-Parliamentary Body in Bath, presumably on either 23 or 25 September. For ease of reference, I attach a further copy of the letter.

I discussed this with the Prime Minister orally today. In principle, he was inclined to favour a repeat performance. Last year's session had gone well. The prospects for progress in the peace process were more positive than they were likely to be in late September this year. But we still needed to get across to Irish journalists that this was not for want of trying on the Government's part.

We agreed, however, that the final decision should depend on space in the diary, if you and others agree that the meeting falls into the "strongly desirable" rather than "essential" category.

May I leave you to take forward from here?

*Edward*

**EDWARD OAKDEN**

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