



10 DOWNING STREET
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THE PRIME MINISTER

23 December 1996

Dear Lordial Daly,

Thank you for your letters of 21 and 28 November.

I want to thank you first of all for your warm and encouraging comments. I have always been grateful for your approach and for your commitment to the difficult process we are engaged in.

I was struck by your view, expressed in your most recent letter, that the republican movement is close to a definitive break with their violent past. You will know how much I hope this is the case. I can assure you that we are concerned to leave the door open for Sinn Fein to join the negotiations on the same basis as all other parties, ie that they have wholly embraced non-violence and democratic politics.

My recent statement was published in order to ensure, in an atmosphere of mounting speculation and anxiety, that our position on important aspects of the Talks and on Sinn Fein's entry was clearly understood. We are not interested in putting obstacles in the way of Sinn Fein and the statement does not propose new pre-conditions for their entry. It does make clear the process by which a judgment can be made on whether any new ceasefire is truly unequivocal. This is, of course, important in building the confidence of the

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other parties, not to mention the people of Britain and Ireland, that a second ceasefire declaration is reliable and that real negotiation can take place. As you say, the potential rewards of peace are too great to calculate.

I hope you will soon be settled in your new residence and beginning to enjoy your well earned retirement. May I wish you a contented and peaceful Christmas.

Yours sincerely,
John Hume

His Eminence Cardinal Cahal B. Daly