



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

28 November 1979

*Mr. R. Kilfedden*

Thank you for your letter of 16 November about the question of representation of Members of Parliament at the Inter-Party Conference on Northern Ireland.

I have discussed your letter with Humphrey Atkins. We were glad to know that you support the Conference. I understand the point you make about representation but it does present a very real problem. The basis on which the Conference is to take place has been agreed and made public. To change the terms of the Conference while we are in the process of setting it up would lead to uncertainty and I am reluctant to risk this.

I realise this will be disappointing for you but I want to assure you that your letter has been carefully weighed. Since receiving it, Humphrey Atkins has been giving close attention to the question of how best to ascertain the views of elected representatives not participating directly in the Conference and of other sections of opinion. You can be confident that appropriate means of doing this will be found and that the views of non-participants will be given full weight.

/Westminster

Westminster MPs will, of course, have an opportunity to express their views in tomorrow's debate. They will also participate in the decisions which the House will ultimately take on whatever proposals the Government puts forward in the light of the Conference.

Yours sincerely

Raymond Johnston

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