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hcc PS/SofS (B)
PS/Mr Scott (L&B)
PS/PUS (L&B)
Mr Brennan
Mr Merifield
Nr Angel
~~Mr Doyle Smith~~

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE
GREAT GEORGE STREET,
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SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR
NORTHERN IRELAND

Mr Cantor
26.7
[Signature]
SWS

Neils J Haagerup Esq
Toftegardsvej 11
3520 Farum
Denmark

26 July 1983

26.7

Dear Mr Haagerup

Thank you for your letter of 4 July in which you sought my views on which politicians and other representative people you might meet during your forthcoming visit to Northern Ireland.

As you know, I have always welcomed your own personal interest in Northern Ireland, and indeed the general interest of other MEPs. I have always made it part of my policy as Secretary of State to seek to improve understanding of the Province, and have been most glad therefore to give what help we could to you. I have held publicly to this line since the Political Affairs Committee announced its intention of conducting an enquiry. I am only sorry that the course of events has muddied perception of your genuine and informed interest in Northern Ireland. That this should have happened is of benefit to nobody, not least the people of Northern Ireland. However, I know that you understand the difficult constitutional issues raised for us by the decision of the Political Affairs Committee to initiate this enquiry, which have led us to make the public response you have seen reported.

The particular circumstances of your visit to Northern Ireland will, given the situation in which, perforce, we find ourselves, mean it would not be appropriate for us to respond positively to your request to make arrangements. I was grateful however, to know of your plans, and was most anxious that you should not think the public position we have adopted was in any way a reflection of my regard for your personal interest in Northern Ireland.

[Signature]