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**Title:** Letter from John Peck, British Ambassador to Ireland, to the Taoiseach, Jack Lynch, attaching a message from the British Prime Minister, Edward Heath, concerning border controls between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland; the refusal of Nationalist representatives to engage in talks; and proposals for reform being put forward by Brian Faulkner, Prime Minister of Northern Ireland.

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BRITISH EMBASSY,  
DUBLIN.

12 October, 1971

*My dear Taoiseach,*

I have been asked to pass the attached message to you from the Prime Minister as soon as possible.

*With all good wishes*

*Yours sincerely,  
John Peck*

John Peck

The Taoiseach, Mr. J. Lynch, TD,  
DUBLIN.

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TEXT OF A MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER, THE  
RT. HON. EDWARD HEATH, M.P., TO THE TAOISEACH,

MR. J. LYNCH, T.D.

I have received your message of 9 October in reply to my account of my further talks with Mr. Faulkner. I can well understand your dislike of the measures which we feel obliged to take to secure a better control of the passage of men and materials across the border from the Republic to Northern Ireland. I too dislike being put in the position of having to take these measures, for they will be costly in manpower and, given the nature of the frontier, will be able to restrict rather than entirely to prevent the illegal passage of terrorists with their guns and explosives. That they go across with impunity at present is shown by the public statement of Joe Cahill. The restriction of such men and their material will assist the security authorities in Northern Ireland in reducing the effect of the violence for which men like him are responsible. I cannot refuse my approval for the necessary measures.

2. The fact is that the situation does not permit us to withhold any effective measures while waiting for progress on the political front. The rate of such progress is not dependent alone on us and the Government of Northern Ireland. If it is to take account of the views of representatives of the minority, as we wish it to do, then the latter must come forward and take part in the discussions which we are anxious to hold as quickly as possible. It is their refusal which is holding things up.

3. You misjudge Brian Faulkner's readiness to continue with the already substantial programme of reform. During our talks at Chequers he told you of some of the measures

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which were in his draft green paper. We have encouraged him to delay publication in the hope that his proposals would be more effective if first discussed with representatives of the minority. As the latter are still refusing their co-operation, I do not think that we can restrain him any longer from publishing his proposals and these are likely to come out soon. We are of course ready also to consider suggestions put forward by the minority groups. Having committed H.M.G. to the objective of securing an active, permanent and guaranteed role for the minority in Northern Ireland's political life, I can assure you that we do not mean to be deflected. No one is more anxious than I am that political progress should be made as quickly as possible and we are in continuing discussion with Mr. Faulkner about the next steps.

4. It is because of the delays in securing this progress, which are not of our making, that we feel obliged to go ahead with the border control measures which I described in my last message. I have given instructions for work on them to start shortly. They will be carried out in such a way as to harm as little as possible the interests of those living right on the border, and they will of course involve no infringement of the territory of the Irish Republic.

\* \* \* \* \*

12 October, 1971

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