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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

March 16, 1988

The Right Honorable
Margaret Thatcher, M.P.
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London, SW1

Dear Prime Minister:

Tomorrow is St. Patrick's Day and the eyes of the world will be focused on Ireland. For people committed to peace and social justice, it is a time to renew the call for an end to discrimination in Northern Ireland.

Recent events have brought to the world's attention the ominous British policies that threaten the well-being of people in Northern Ireland. British security forces have taken on the character of death squads in Central America, with the enthusiastic support of your government.

The crushing of the Stalker/Sampson Report, the release and reinstatement of convicted murderer Private Ian Thain, and the killings of Ardán McAnespie have created a mosaic of murder, suspicion, and hatred that only extraordinary action and goodwill can overcome. Killers and perjurers should be brought to justice and the world should know the truth.

Economic inequality persists in Northern Ireland, with Catholic unemployment remaining 2.5 times higher than Protestant unemployment 12 years after the creation of the Fair Employment Agency. New British proposals for fair employment legislation stand as empty rhetoric against a backdrop of decades of neglect. We call for meaningful statutory requirements for goals and timetables to be included in primary legislation so that the upcoming British White Paper does not become another British whitewash.

We vehemently oppose all paramilitary violence, and we urge non-violent change to end all discrimination in Northern Ireland. Mrs. Thatcher, we call upon you today to enact meaningful fair employment legislation in this session of Parliament, prosecute those who obstructed justice as detailed in the Stalker/Sampson report, restructure the Diplock court system away from the one judge court to a three man court, and to make public the police code of conduct developed for the R.U.C.

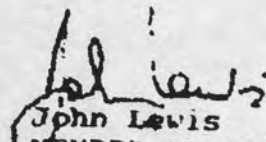
These struggles are not new to Americans. During the recent observance of Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday and national holiday, we were all impressed again by his message of non-violence and his unshakeable commitment to fight discrimination wherever he found it. At a time when the thoughts of the world turn to the Irish, it is urgent to consider what is taking place in Northern Ireland, and to add another coal to the fire that must burn inside us all.

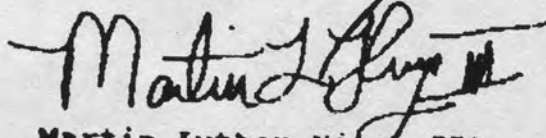
It is within the power of your government to change any laws that keep those of two different faiths unequal. Only after progress is made toward changing those laws and administering a code of justice that treats all people fairly, can we hope that some of the fear and distrust will leave the hearts of the Irish people.


Today, we ask for a rededication to that goal. We pray that the next year in Northern Ireland will be remembered as a time of healing, understanding, progress and trust. And most importantly of all, may it be a time of peace.

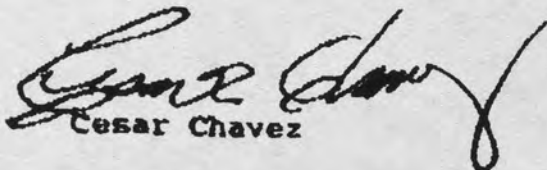
Sincerely,

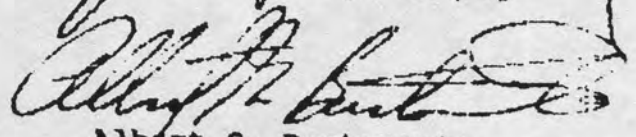

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