



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

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AMBASÁID NA HÉIREANN, LONDAIN.



IRISH EMBASSY, LONDON.

*Ray McLarty  
to 1.88.  
61*

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17 Grosvenor Place  
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*cc AG  
ex Mr Hall  
P&P  
Mr Heathcote/Mr Brennan  
Mr Russell  
TRX.*

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23 December, 1988

Dear Assistant Secretary

Conversation with Graham Angel, Home Office

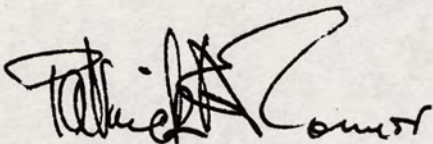
Following on the announcement by the Home Secretary of the Government's intention to derogate under Article 15 of the European Convention on Human Rights in respect of the powers under the PTA to detain suspects in the context of terrorism connected with the affairs of Northern Ireland, I made contact with Angel, the Under Secretary with responsibility for the PTA.

I commented to Angel that I noted that the derogation was limited to terrorism connected with the affairs of Northern Ireland. He responded that they felt that they had to be as specific as this to ensure that the derogation would be defensible under Article 15. They felt that any wider phrase such as "terrorism" without qualification or "international terrorism" might not be defensible.

He said that they felt that they could not delay any longer in reacting to the Court's judgment, although the present measure must be seen as temporary, pending definitive measures at a later stage after further reflection and consultation. The British authorities felt that if they did not take some action now they would be leaving themselves open to challenge, and possibly claims for compensation, in the case of any extended detentions under the PTA.

Officially, the derogation will remain in force only until a satisfactory way of introducing a judicial element into the procedure has been found. Angel acknowledged that this process may take a long time if the difficulty they have encountered in their efforts to date is any guide. From our conversation, I formed the impression that this "temporary" derogation may well be a very long lasting one.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick O'Connor', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Patrick O'Connor  
Minister Plenipotentiary  
Charge d'Affaires a.i.

Mr. Dermot A. Gallagher  
Assistant Secretary  
Department of Foreign Affairs

c.c. Mr. D. O'Donovan, Anglo-Irish Division