**Sample Letter**

*You may be asked to write a letter in Paper One, Section One, Question B – here is a sample letter and the standard that will get you an A grade*

987 Somewhereville

No-mans-land

Co. Kildare

12/05/2012

Department of Whatever

123 Kildare Street

Dublin 12

Dear Mr. Kenny,

In the words of Martin Luther King, I have a dream. I have a vision of the kind of Ireland I want my children to grow up in, the kind of Ireland we need to create for their sake. Otherwise we must prepare ourselves to look them in the eye and answer their accusation ‘where did it all go wrong?

We all know the problems we face – an overloaded healthcare system, an ageing population, mass unemployment, gang violence, rote learning in education, drink and drug abuse, a ruined rural landscape and the kind of climate extremes we simply are not equipped to cope with. Is this the Ireland we want for our children? And if not, what are the alternatives?

Let me paint a picture of one future Ireland we could create. Let’s introduce euthanasia immediately – people over 70 are simply a burden on our healthcare system and a strain on already-stretched public finances with their never-ending pension demands (and believe me, nobody will miss that distinctive old-person smell which follows them everywhere they go!). Secondly, let’s build a large electrified fence around Limerick city, evacuate the law-abiding citizens, provide plenty of weapons and leave them to it. Within six months, problem solved! (The level of unemployment should also fall considerably as a handy side-effect: most of these career criminals have been signing on at multiple locations for years).

Let’s abolish the Leaving Certificate and simply get every student to sit the Mensa IQ test at the end of their school days (grind schools will disappear, as will exam stress – you can’t swot your way to a higher IQ). And while we’re at it let’s bring an end to all substance abuse. Raymed, an American pharmaceutical company have recently developed a product which causes individuals to become violently ill instantly when they consume a mind-altering substance. So let’s introduce a compulsory vaccination programme for all drink and drug addicts. Perhaps we should include all teenagers too, thus instantly solving the problem of underage substance abuse while we’re at it!

Let’s employ drivers to bulldoze all those empty rural housing estates (the unemployment rate will fall even further). Finally let’s place giant sandbags the length and breadth of our beautiful coastline and hand out snow-tyres to all citizens. There you go Mr. Taoiseach, problems solved.

Of course there is another way. There is another future which demands bravery and hard work from you, Mr. Kenny and from everybody in your cabinet. In this future those entering hospital are treated quickly and efficiently because you have had the courage to fire the pen-pushing middle management and are using this money instead to open much needed beds and hire more front-line staff.

In this future ordinary people do not live in fear of gang violence because a complex approach (including harsher punishments, rural relocation programmes, education and the kind of dialogue which brought about the ceasefire in Northern Ireland) is ruthlessly pursued until we see results. (Of sourse if we fail there’s always the option of compulsory sterilisation!)

In this future the Leaving Certificate tests real skills and practical knowledge not the ability to memorise reams of irrelevant information. This will only happen if you finally implement the recommendations of the 2005 report by the Examinations Commission which offered detailed proposals for a complete overhaul of both the Leaving and Junior Certificate exams.

In this future stricter customs inspections, lengthier prison sentences, more affordable rehabilitation centres and education make drugs less attractive and less available. In this future we have changed our attitude towards alcohol because the government have provided affordable alternatives to the pub in the form of youth centres, community centres, sports centres, cinemas and parks.

In this future the beauty of our rural landscape is preserved because you prioritise it above the demands of greedy developers. In this future you have learned to minimise the effects of climate change because you have plans in place to deal with flash floods, freezing fog and snow that doesn’t melt for weeks on end.

The first future is easy and barbaric. The second requires patience and hard work. So get to it – our children are depending on you.

Yours Sincerely,

Joe Soap