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CL:EO
SSAN

Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

11 June 1996

Pl. retype
letters to
PM's sig.
John 12/6.

Dear John,

Northern Ireland Chairmanships: Prime Ministerial Messages
to Canada and Finland

Although the negotiations in Belfast have now begun, we have been considering whether there is a need to acknowledge the continuing support given to the peace process by the Governments of the US, Canada and Finland. As separate contacts between the Prime Minister and President Clinton have already taken place on the sensitive issue of Senator Mitchell's involvement, we believe that a message to President Clinton would be inappropriate at this stage.

Both Prime Minister Chretien and President Ahtisaari have however also given consistent support to the peace process. Harri Holkeri and John de Chastelain are not employed by their Governments, but in both cases letters of gratitude recognising the value of the Governments' positive approach (which includes practical assistance by their Foreign Ministries) would be welcomed.

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I attach two suggested drafts for the Prime Minister's signature; these may need last-minute alteration depending on developments in Belfast. We recommend for the sake of speed that these are faxed direct to the High Commission in Ottawa and the Embassy in Helsinki for onward transmission.

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I am copying this letter to Martin Howard at the Northern Ireland Office.

*yours truly,
Dominic*

(D J Chilcott)
Private Secretary

John Holmes Esq
10 Downing Street

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