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From: **JOHN HOLMES**

Date: **3 July 1996**

PRIME MINISTER

cc: **Mr. Oakden**
Mr. Haslam

MEETING WITH SIR PATRICK MAYHEW

FERB and Sir John Chilcot are also coming. The aim is to have a first discussion of the Hume/Adams initiative, and a preparatory discussion of terrorism before NI tomorrow. I suggest you take the questions in that order.

I attach:

Hume/Adams

- .. - record of your discussion with Hume, and my covering note;
- .. - Adams' letter.

Terrorism

- .. - paper circulated to members of NI today.

Hume/Adams

Sir Patrick Mayhew should come armed with the NIO's advice. You may like to ask him to start.

Four obvious options:

- (i) Do nothing: not credible, vis-a-vis Hume, Adams or the Americans.
- (ii) Tell Hume we will say what is wanted and say it, e.g. in a press interview.

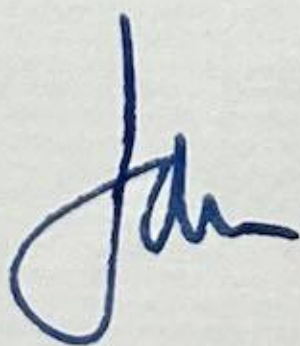
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- (iii) Go back to Hume with more questions: why is Adams' letter so different from what you said? Why are you so sure a further statement will deliver a ceasefire? Is Adams aware that a new ceasefire will not get Sinn Fein into talks immediately?
- (iv) Go back to Adams, either directly via an NIO official or indirectly via a deniable intermediary, to point out that it is for him to establish his credibility with us, not the other way round; to query what he means by an unequivocal ceasefire; and to ask why we should believe a new ceasefire is likely, given Manchester and Osnabruck. But we should not get into a separate negotiation with him.

It may be best not to seek to reach a firm conclusion today, but commission definitive advice from NIO for your weekend box. You need time to think it through.

Terrorism

I suggest you concentrate on handling of NI rather than substance. I have toned down the Cabinet Office paper, as agreed overnight, but it is still favourable to NIO perceptions. Sir P. Mayhew's views on internment and a new supremo are clearly hostile, but he will need to be well briefed to take on the Home Secretary and Cranborne. One question is who should introduce the paper. Would it be proper for Sir R. Butler to do so? You will not wish to identify yourself with it, especially at the beginning of the meeting.



John Holmes

fmay.as