

CONFIDENTIAL



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

3 July 1996

Dear Martin,

HUME/ADAMS INITIATIVE

Although Hume told the Prime Minister when they met on 2 July that Dublin was not aware of his initiative, I do not believe this was correct. When I spoke to Paddy Teahon on the telephone on 3 July, he asked me various questions about the possibility of a new ceasefire and about what Adams and Hume had been saying in such a way as to make clear that he was aware that something was going on. I therefore gave him a brief account, without revealing details and without mentioning specifically the Adams letter. I asked him to hold this closely within the Irish Government.

Teahon's reaction was to ask that I should keep him in touch and in particular let him know if we did propose to say anything new in public. I said that I thought we would want to consider the position carefully before rushing in, but undertook to keep in close touch. Teahon's concern on the substance was that we should not ignore these approaches or refuse to respond. The IRA should not be given new excuses to step up the violence. It would be better to say what we were being asked, if it really gave us no difficulty, and put the onus back on the IRA to produce a ceasefire.

I am copying this letter to Jan Polley (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever

JOHN HOLMES

Martin Howard, Esq.,
Northern Ireland Office.

CONFIDENTIAL