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Letter sent

From: JOHN HOLMES

Date: 19 July 1996

*L.Y.
John
20/7*

PRIME MINISTER

RELATIONS WITH THE TAOISEACH

Apologies for yet another piece of paper about Northern Ireland, but you have not yet replied to the Taoiseach. I had not given you a draft, and was inclined to think a reply not worthwhile.

But it may be easier to re-establish contact in writing. So I now attach a possible reply. It aims to register your points briefly while drawing a line under them and opening the way for a telephone conversation at some point next week. I think this is necessary - if there is one point on which there is almost universal agreement (outside the Unionists), it is that we and the Irish Government must keep working together. I have of course kept in regular touch with Teahon.

An alternative to a written reply would be to go straight to a phone call, eg on Monday morning while Bruton is in London (see separate paper in the box). That would be better if you could bear it. Even better would be to offer him breakfast, but I suspect that really is pushing my luck!

John

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