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File 2/ decom, me/

From the Private Secretary

8 July 1996

Dear Martin,

**NORTHERN IRELAND ARMS DECOMMISSIONING BILL**

The Prime Minister has seen Sir Patrick Mayhew's minute, bringing colleagues up to date on work on the decommissioning legislation. Sir Patrick recommends that, in view of the changed political and security climate, we should not attempt to push the Bill through Parliament before the summer, but should instead publish the draft legislation, with the Irish Government publishing their own proposals at the same time.

Subject to the views of other colleagues, the Prime Minister is content with this approach. However, he would like to be clear that David Trimble is prepared to live with it too. Sir Patrick may therefore like to confirm this with Mr Trimble again before going ahead finally.

I am copying this to the Private Secretaries of Members of NI, the Lord President, the Chief Whip and Sir Robin Butler.

Yours ever  
John

**JOHN HOLMES**

Martin Howard Esq  
Northern Ireland Office

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