

CONFIDENTIAL

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10 DOWNING STREET
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From the Private Secretary

8 July 1996

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Dear Mr. Akin,

HUME/ADAMS INITIATIVE

Thank you for your letter of 5 July, enclosing a revised draft letter from the Prime Minister to John Hume. The Prime Minister was generally content with this. I enclose a slightly revised version. If you see no problem with this, we will despatch the letter later today, as discussed.

Your letter raises the issue of keeping the Irish and US Governments informed. In fact I had already spoken to Lake and Teahon to foreshadow the kind of response we would be giving. Lake simply took note. Teahon said that the Irish Government had now heard of this initiative from the SDLP, Sinn Fein and Irish-American sources. He, Teahon, rather shared our view that it was not serious, but he urged us to respond positively to ensure that we gave no excuses to the IRA to step up their violence.

Should we now say more to the Americans and the Irish, and perhaps give them a copy of the Prime Minister's letter? This would mean also giving them a copy of Adams' letter. I can see merit in this but would be grateful for your advice.

Should we also brief Senator Mitchell and his colleagues? This would ensure that they heard our version of what is going on and not someone else's distorted account. Again I would be grateful for your comments.

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

Yours ever

JOHN HOLMES

Martin Howard, Esq.,
Northern Ireland Office.