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10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

29 July 1996

Dear Martin,

**VISIT TO NORTHERN IRELAND BY MINISTER WITHOUT
PORTFOLIO**

You may be interested in the following brief account given by Dr Mawhinney to the Prime Minister last week. Dr Mawhinney saw Archbishop Eames and Cardinal Daly, as well as other friends and contacts.

Archbishop Eames: the Archbishop stressed:

- the importance of keeping the talks going and getting down to substance;
- the need for a review of the RUC, with at least some input from outsiders;
- the need to bolster the Loyalist ceasefire (which the Prime Minister's meeting with the Loyalists had since done) and tackle some of the grievances of the Loyalist prisoners;
- the need for a judicial commission to take decisions about parades out of the hands of the RUC;
- the (paradoxical) Unionist need for reassurance on parity of esteem, a point which he had since repeated publicly;
- the desirability of Dublin keeping quiet, and HMG taking a low profile, to let the grieving over Drumcree be done quietly.

Cardinal Daly

The meeting had been friendly. The Cardinal had mentioned:

- the need for relations between the British and Irish Governments to be improved;

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- the huge damage in the Catholic community from Drumcree;
- the breakdown of relations with the RUC;
- the real leadership role of Brendan MacKenna with the Garvaghy Road residents;
- his continuing feeling that he had been abused by HMG over the Garvaghy Road talks;
- his continuing efforts to try to draw Sinn Fein/IRA into a new ceasefire, which he thought was not impossible;
- the desirability of HMG opening a "second front" through direct contacts with Sinn Fein;
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- his view that no one was now seriously challenging the Union, and the need for the Unionists to understand that.

Overall, from these and other contacts, Dr Mawhinney's main impressions were that the level of damage done by Drumcree in the Nationalist community was greater than most people in London realised, and that there was now real fear about what might happen over the Apprentice Boys.

Yours ever
John Holmes
JOHN HOLMES

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