

R27/8

FROM: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE
STORMONT CASTLE
BELFAST BT4 3ST

Tel. Belfast (01232) 520700

John Holmes Esq
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1A 2AA

*Pl. type to
pm's office
for
29/8.*

23 August 1996

Dear John

Cardinal Daly wrote to the Prime Minister on 28 July about recent events in Northern Ireland. He refers to events at Drumcree; to meetings he had in July with Brian Mawhinney and Michael Ancram; and to his concern, in the aftermath of Drumcree, for the credibility of the RUC and for the future of political talks. It is noted that in his letter he does not repeat the call he made publicly at a mass for peace on 21 July for a public inquiry into Drumcree.

2. The tone of his letter is friendly and personal; while he is critical of the Chief Constable's decision in respect of Drumcree, and predicts that the consequences of Drumcree will have a grave effect on Talks, he is supportive and encouraging of the Prime Minister's efforts to secure a political settlement in Northern Ireland.

3. A draft reply is attached for consideration. The reply expresses the Prime Minister's gratitude for the Cardinal's vote of confidence in him and his pledge of continued support for the democratic talks process. It touches on the marches issue, referring in general terms to Drumcree and the successful management of the Apprentice Boys' parade in Londonderry on 10 August, and to the review now mounted by Dr North. It deliberately avoids, however, getting into a detailed exchange over events at Drumcree.

Yours ever

PAUL WILKINSON
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE RT HON SIR JOHN WHELER DL MP

MOFS/11521