

**PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL**

**From: Jonathan Haslam**  
**Date: 15 January 1997**

**JOHN HOLMES**

**NORTHERN IRELAND**

*Spoke to Jonathan - we are aware  
of this new Hume initiative.  
File Jan 16/1*

I should report to you a telephone conversation I had today with the editor of a national news organisation whom I regard as completely trustworthy and straight.

He told me that yesterday he had taken a call from a Mr Jim Fitzpatrick, Chief Executive of the Irish News in Belfast. To ensure that this was a genuine individual the call was returned before any substantive conversation took place.

Mr Fitzpatrick (a nationalist) claimed that he had played and continued to play a part in the peace process, behind the scenes, with John Hume MP. He understood that my contact had a direct route to the Prime Minister and wanted to pass a message. He was told that this was not the case but it would be possible to speak to people close to the Prime Minister. Mr Fitzpatrick said that the Prime Minister should be in receipt of a communication from John Hume via John Chilcott and that he wanted to stress how important it was for the peace process that the Prime Minister's response should be positive. He said "I personally think it would be a terrible tragedy if it is not responded to positively. I am aware of all the difficulties on the home scene but the nature of the response is very important".



My contact asked what more he should do in responding to Mr Fitzpatrick. I told him that in his position I would merely say that he had taken action as promised concerning the message.

I agreed that I would not reveal the name of my contact. He said that his organisation would be writing nothing of this story on the basis of its confidential inception, but that he was not keen to be a conduit again and would make this point to Mr Fitzpatrick.

I am sure you will know what weight to put on this information, which I trust you find helpful.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**JONATHAN HASLAM**