

**From: JOHN HOLMES**

**Date: 20 January 1997**

**PRIME MINISTER**

**MEETING WITH TRIMBLE: 1545**

Trimble is calling on you at his request, in the House after PMQs. He will be accompanied, but I am not yet sure by whom. Paddy Mayhew and Michael Ancram will probably both be there on our side.

... I attach as background:

- the record of your pre-Christmas discussion with Trimble (as you know, he has changed his mind on keeping the talks going since);
- accounts of his discussions with Cranborne;
- an interview with him over the weekend, where he mentions his ideas for shadowing the NI parties in the social and economic fields; and is otherwise in reasonably constructive mode.
- NIO briefing on the talks and Trimble's likely particular points. This is absurdly long but shows where we are, particularly on decommissioning.

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... I also attach a checklist of points to make with Trimble. The key is how hard you wish to push him on decommissioning, and to discourage his "shadowing" ideas as inadequate. You may want to be reasonably robust, in all the circumstances. He may be readier to listen than before Christmas.

Trimble has not seen the draft recommendations of the North report, as far as I know, but he will be aware that it is due to come out by the end of January, and may have picked up something of the substance through the usual Belfast grapevine. If he raises it, I suggest you simply say that you have not seen the report, but that you are sure Paddy Mayhew will want to discuss it with him when we know what it says.

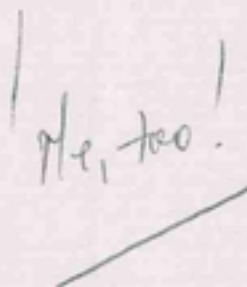
You will be seeing Trimble again on Thursday, together with the other NI party leaders, to talk about the Education Boards.

You are also seeing the NI Women's Coalition on Wednesday, fulfilling a pre-Christmas promise. I am sorry Northern Ireland is taking so much time again.



**JOHN HOLMES**

**20 January 1997**



[Trimble.MRM]