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10 DOWNING STREET
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*Lel. Dec J. Harlan
C. Barton
J. Holmes*

From the Private Secretary

17 February 1997

Dear Ken,

NORTHERN IRELAND: VIOLENCE

The reaction to last week's shooting, and the impact made by Mrs MacElroy, have helped to create a climate of considerable hostility to continuing IRA violence. We should try to take advantage of this as far as possible. One way of doing this would be for the Prime Minister to publish an article in the press, perhaps in one of the Northern Ireland newspapers. The aim would be to underscore the futility of further violence, as well as its unacceptability. I attach a possible draft, on which I would be grateful for rapid comments.

I am copying this to Jan Polley (Cabinet Office) and Veronica Sutherland in Dublin by fax.

Yours ever

John

JOHN HOLMES

Ken Lindsay Esq
Northern Ireland Office

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