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From the Private Secretary

30 January 1997

*Dear Ken,***TELEPHONE CALL WITH THE TAOISEACH**

As you know the Taoiseach is keen to speak to the Prime Minister on the telephone. We had thought that the oral message he passed yesterday urging rapid action on the North Report might remove the need for this, but Paddy Teahon told me this morning that this was not the case. The Taoiseach wanted to touch base on four issues:

- the North Report: it is not clear what more can be said – I went through our response and the reasons for it with Teahon in some detail;
- Bloody Sunday: Teahon did not say so but I guess it will be valuable for the Taoiseach domestically to say that he raised this with the Prime Minister;
- how to bring the Belfast talks to a close in the way best calculated to allow their restart after the election: the Irish are keen to orchestrate this with us, and if possible involve Opposition parties in both London and Dublin, and the Americans. They hope we can exchange drafts about what can be said at the time and the circumstances of the resumption (a hint about Sinn Fein inclusion?);
- the possibility of another IRA ceasefire. Father Fall(?) had been telling the Taoiseach that the IRA would declare a ceasefire on 10 April. The Taoiseach was not convinced that they would, and was in any case sure that if they did, it would be simply an act of hypocrisy. But he wanted to exchange notes with the Prime Minister.

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Teahon claimed that the Taoiseach did not want to push the Prime Minister in particular directions on any of these issues, but simply wanted to keep in touch. I interpreted this as meaning that a call is important to the Taoiseach in domestic terms, even if the content is relatively slight.

The call is likely to take place at 1545 tomorrow. I would be grateful if appropriate briefing could reach us by midday, including any particular background on Father Fall's views, if we know them.

I am copying this to Veronica Sutherland in Dublin.

Yours ee
John

JOHN HOLMES

Ken Lindsay Esq
Northern Ireland Office

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