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*See letters out**R. U*

From: JOHN HOLMES

Date: 11 February 1997

*John 12/2.***PRIME MINISTER**  

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**LETTER FROM DAVID TRIMBLE**

... You will recall that Trimble wrote to you at the end of last week complaining that  
 ... the NIO were not taking seriously the ideas the UUP had put forward for  
 association of the Northern Ireland political parties with decision-making in the  
 Province; and that no progress was being made on the Northern Ireland Grand  
 Committee. ✓

... I now attach the NIO advice on this letter. The substance is not unreasonable but  
 as usual they take little or no account of the broader political scene. ✓

I have discussed this with both Cranborne and Murdo. On the so-called "Empey  
 ideas" the NIO are quite right that they will not run, but there is nothing to be  
 lost by continuing to discuss them with the UUP. On the Grand Committee, it is  
 pretty clear that the NIO have been dragging their feet. While many of the  
 UUP's more ambitious ideas for the Grand Committee cannot be taken forward,  
 there is no reason why the Grand Committee should not be reorganised on the  
 new Scottish/Welsh lines very quickly. ✓

... I have amended the draft letter to Trimble attached to the NIO advice  
 accordingly. I also propose to write to the NIO to reinforce what I have already  
 said to them orally: that they should continue to discuss the Empey ideas with  
 the UUP without sounding over negative about them; and that you are ✓

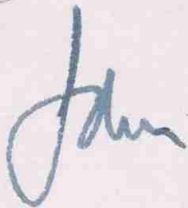
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particularly keen, given your Party Conference promise, that the revised Grand Committee should be up and running as soon as possible.

**Content** to sign the letter to Trimble as amended and for me to write to the NIO on these lines?

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John', is written below the text.

**JOHN HOLMES**

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