

CONFIDENTIAL *File*

10 DOWNING STREET  
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From the Private Secretary

11 February 1997

*Dear Ken,***BLOODY SUNDAY**

Thank you for your letter of 5 February with advice on John Hume's proposal that the Prime Minister see him and family members from among the Bloody Sunday victims.

As I have mentioned on the phone, the Prime Minister is not immediately attracted by the idea of being drawn further down the road towards "apologising" for Bloody Sunday, even assuming that a distinction between "regret" and "apologise" will hold up. He sees more possible disadvantages in this than advantages. As we agreed, I have told John Hume that a meeting with your Secretary of State is the right way forward. I believe that this is now happening on 14 February.

I suggest that we take stock again after that, and after it is clear whether the application for judicial review of the Widgery Tribunal will be taken forward. We will then be better placed to judge how much steam there is behind the present campaign to reopen the Widgery conclusions, and how and when we should respond to this, if at all.

I am copying this letter to Mike Venables (Ministry of Defence) and Jan Polley (Cabinet Office).

*Yours ever*  
*John*

**JOHN HOLMES**

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Northern Ireland Office

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