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From the Private Secretary

4 March 1997

*Dear Ken,*

**EXCHANGES WITH JOHN HUME: NI PAPER**

Thank you for your letter of 3 March and the draft NI paper. The Prime Minister is content for a paper to be circulated to NI tomorrow to explain the background and focus discussion. However, he thinks the present draft could be seen as unbalanced in one or two places and could usefully be amended. I attach a copy of the draft with some suggested changes in manuscript. Please let me know if any of them, or the reasons for them, are unclear.

As far as the draft answers are concerned, the Prime Minister likes the shorter alternative answer to question one. Is it necessary to include the first two alternatives? On the answer to question two, the Prime Minister thinks the answer as it stands, without the addition, reads well, but is content for the possible addition to be left in brackets, as now.

I am copying this letter to Jane Hope (Lord Privy Seal's Office) and Jan Polley (Cabinet Office).

*Yours ever*  
*John*

JOHN HOLMES

Ken Lindsay, Esq.  
Northern Ireland Office

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