

CONFIDENTIAL

File

JH 17/3

From: John Holmes
Date: 10 March 1997

PRIME MINISTER

TRIMBLE

Trimble is probably coming to see me tomorrow, to touch base before his US trip for St. Patrick's Day. The only awkward point is the Hume/Adams exercise of which (I think) he knows nothing, but which is likely to emerge in one way or another at the beginning of the following week. I am reluctant to say nothing at all about it, since that would undermine our credibility, but equally cannot brief him properly yet, since that would be contrary to the NI agreement and there is a real danger of him going public.

I therefore propose to say at some point that, despite Hume's recent denunciation of Sinn Fein, he appears still to be working on a new ceasefire in his usual naïve way, and is likely to go on pressing us to respond positively to Adams' recent press article. I will assure Trimble that, if Hume does put specific questions to us (as you know, he is being asked to write a new, specific letter but has not yet done so), our response will not diverge from existing policy. I will not give more detail otherwise.

Content? Anything else you would like me to say to him?



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