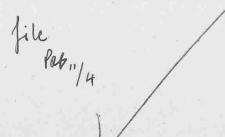
The National Archives' reference PREM 19/6089

SECRET



From: Philip Barton Date: 11 April 1997 S 31 /97

PRIME MINISTER

cc: Mr Holmes (o/r)

NORTHERN IRELAND

- You might like a short update. The IRA have claimed responsibility for the shooting of the RUC policewoman in Londonderry yesterday. Her condition is stable. Sir Patrick Mayhew issued a statement condemning the attack. A couple of motorways in England were closed temporarily following security alerts earlier today, but these turned out to be false alarms rather than coded IRA warnings.
- As you may have heard, there were strong rumours yesterday that Sinn Fein were about to announce a ceasefire. In the event, nothing happened. It is not clear why –

THIS IS A COPY. THE ORIGINAL IS RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3 (4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT

> Overall, yesterday's shooting, coupled with the recent hoaxes and bombs on the

mainland have put Sinn Fein on the defensive. The Irish Government have been taking a helpfully robust line – the Taoiseach said on Wednesday evening, after a meeting with Hume, that "a vote for Sinn Fein is a vote of support for the IRA and the IRA's campaign of killing and murder".

SECRET

Philip

q:\aps\ni eam.doc