

PRIME MINISTER

*File
John 14/5.*

From: John Holmes

Date: 13 May 1997

cc: Jonathan Powell
Alex Allan
Mark Adams
Alastair Campbell

SINN FEIN IN WESTMINSTER

*cc: Ireland
14/5.*

I understand that the Speaker will make a statement at 2.30 tomorrow in the House. She will say simply that anyone who has not taken his seat cannot speak in the House, take part in its activities, or have any access to its facilities. This means no office for Sinn Fein, but the Speaker will not spell this out, or go into detail about the reasons for her decision.

She has cleared this approach with the Attorney General. It is contrary to Erskine May, but Erskine May is only practice and tradition, not law.

The Speaker will expect support from the main parties for her decision, and will no doubt get it.

John

JOHN HOLMES