

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY  
CONFIDENTIAL



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cc FA/APS  
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VAC

*File*

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10 July 1997

*Dear John,*

**NORTHERN IRELAND: RESOLVING DECOMMISSIONING**

Dr Mowlam and Paul Murphy had a good discussion with David Trimble this morning about the concerns set out in his letter of 30 June to the Prime Minister. They were given the very clear impression that if the position of the two Governments on the issue of decommissioning were adjusted to ensure that decommissioning could actually begin on 15 September, the UUP would support the "possible conclusions" tabled by the two Governments on 25 June.

It will be difficult to persuade the Irish to go along with this, especially in current circumstances and in view of the possible impact on the prospects for securing an IRA ceasefire. Dr Mowlam therefore suggests that the Prime Minister should write to the Taoiseach on the lines of the attached draft, urging him to give the possibility serious consideration. The draft sets out the background and the arguments for responding positively to what is the fundamental problem the UUP have with the joint paper on decommissioning. It would be highly desirable for the Prime Minister to have a word with David Trimble before he writes, so that the letter can truly reflect his personal judgement of the UUP's position.

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Ltrs J Holmes



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For ease of reference I attach a copy of the (two-part) draft response to the points raised in Mr Trimble's letter of 30 June which is under consideration between the two Governments at official level. We will need to consider, in consultation with the Irish and David Trimble, how best to deploy whatever is finally agreed. Some will need to be presented, orally or in writing, to the talks participants on behalf of both Governments, but it may be appropriate for the Prime Minister to respond directly to Mr Trimble on the points relevant to the aide memoire, possibly enclosing or referring to whatever is said jointly on the decommissioning paper.

I am sending copies of this letter and its enclosures to William Ehrman, Veronica Sutherland and Sir Robin Butler.

*Yours ever,*

*Ken*

W K LINDSAY

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