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FROM THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



CONFIDENTIAL

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE
11 MILLBANK
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John Holmes Esq
Private Secretary
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Dear John

PARADES

You asked for a briefing note on the parades issue, and specifically the options at Drumcree, for the Prime Minister's information. I attach a short paper which I hope fits the bill.

It may be worth underlining that the responsibility for taking decisions about re-routing or setting other conditions on parades rests with the Chief Constable, who is operationally independent; but of course remains in close touch with the Secretary of State. (I might also mention that the operational options set out in paragraph 11 of the paper are sensitive, since if either the residents or the Orange Order formed any impression of what the final decision might be, they might well try to take pre-emptive action which could greatly complicate operations on the day.)

A copy goes to Jan Polley (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever
David Vyle
W K LINDSAY

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Prime Minister
This is for background. No
decisions yet. As discussed option
(i) looks most likely at this
distance. But none of the options
is attractive.

6 June 1997

John 6/6.