

Comments faxed to No. 10 11/9 DA
 This seems fine; the detail of the Trimble
 letter should be gone over with him. You should phone
 him too to say how much we are accommodating him.
 The more Murphy can do, publicly & clearly, for
 the Unionists the better. That's

From: John Holmes

Date: 29 August 1997

PRIME MINISTER

NORTHERN IRELAND

*my steer. It's unfortunate about the
 2 press news. But really
 something must be able to be done for
 PUP.*
 Mo's announcement of the invitation to Sinn Fein seems to have gone off pretty
 well in the circumstances, although I have not of course seen Saturday's papers at
 this stage. Television coverage was satisfactorily brief and, if not positive, at
 least neutral and not hostile. Trimble's reaction has been reasonable, relatively
 speaking. *an a
 imperfect*

*There must be a new
 to get him on board.*
 I now attach a batch of papers from the NIO setting out their first thoughts on
 how to take forward action to keep the UUP happy. In particular, there is
 material about the confidence-building measures, and a draft letter to Trimble; a
 note on Loyalist prisoners, which makes clear that the two ill prisoners cannot
 reasonably be released but that the enduring nature of the Loyalist ceasefire will
 be fully taken into account for future prisoner releases; and a letter about the
 possibility of legislation on RUC reform. Separately, Mo has been doing her
 best in all her statements today to say things about consent and decommissioning
 to correct some of the misconceptions which have arisen. *Let me
 know how
 Monday's
 would suit
 today
 evening*

I think this is all a reasonable start, which I will press Paul Murphy to continue
 through next week. Is there any particular further steer you wish to give? On a
 specific point, are you happy to endorse Mo's argument that the RUC reform
 should be tackled through legislation, while of course making clear that the views
 of the business managers will have to be taken into account?

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Meanwhile, following your constructive conversation with Ahern, we need to get back to the Irish with new specific forms of words about consent and decommissioning, and with more details of how the fudge on chairmanship might work. I will try to do some work on words over the weekend, to show you when you get back to No. 10 on Monday morning.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'John' or 'J.H.', written in a cursive style.

JOHN HOLMES

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