

**FAXED**

- To PM  
in his Constituency  
29/8/97

**From: John Holmes**  
**Date: 29 August 1997**

**PRIME MINISTER**

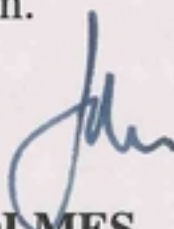
**CALL TO THE TAOISEACH**

I have provisionally agreed with the Irish that you and the Taoiseach should speak around 1830 this evening.

I attach a speaking note which reflects material the NIO sent over. The aim is obviously to capitalise on the Irish goodwill over Sinn Fein's invitation to the talks, and press the case for keeping the UUP in (which the Irish say they want too). We went the extra mile for Sinn Fein in our clarification. We must do the same for the UUP.

Ahern has throughout been concerned to know whether any concessions he makes will do the trick with Trimble, ie whether the cause is hopeless. Informal contacts with them suggest that, while this remains a concern, an equally strong but slightly different worry is that we will go back to them again asking for more if the UUP say a first round of concessions is not enough. Reassurance on this point may therefore be helpful.

The formulation of decommissioning in the note has already been discussed by NIO and Irish officials, and may be acceptable to the Irish. I am not sure it will be quite enough - previous formulations on this and consent attached behind for comparison. We can send the Irish forms of words once you and the Taoiseach have spoken.



**JOHN HOLMES**