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From the Private Secretary

28 August 1997

Dear Ken,

VISIT TO NORTHERN IRELAND BY MRS CLINTON

Hillary Clinton is proposing to come to the UK at the beginning of November to pursue political discussions with the Prime Minister and others. She is likely to be at Chequers on 1-2 November. She has also said that she would like to visit Northern Ireland before 1-2 November, as well as staying in London for a few days after.

I would be grateful if you could reflect on this and turn your mind to what she might do during a visit to Northern Ireland. Assuming the circumstances remain favourable, her visit could be part of the programme of high level visits to the Province which the Prime Minister is keen to encourage, to demonstrate international support for Northern Ireland's return to normality. But the visit may not be easy to handle in other respects, not least from a security point of view, and will need careful thought. I would be grateful for advice by mid September at the latest.

I am copying this to John Grant (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Jan Polley (Cabinet Office) and Sir John Kerr in Washington.

Yours ever

JOHN HOLMES *John*

Ken Lindsay Esq
Northern Ireland Office

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