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10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

18 October 1996

Dear Gen.

HUME/ADAMS INITIATIVE: FOLLOW-UP TO NI

It may be useful if I record where things stand on the evening of 18 October.

John Hume rang me this morning to ask about developments. I said that we were still looking at the question of texts, but it would meanwhile be helpful if he could give us more convincing evidence about a new ceasefire. What would the IRA say in announcing a ceasefire? What would they do after an announcement to demonstrate that it would be lasting? As agreed, I suggested that he should meet Michael Ancram on 20 October to go through all this in more detail. I was working on an appointment for him with the Prime Minister, but this would probably not be until later next week. Hume, who was suffering from flu, took all this well and said that he would contact Michael Ancram. He did not, on this occasion, go back to the need for speed and the possibility of further attacks soon. (We have pencilled in an appointment for Hume with the Prime Minister on the afternoon of 24 October, but this should not be revealed to him at this stage.)

I have spoken to Teahon again on the lines agreed, and sent him the text of the new paragraph on the entry terms for Sinn Fein. We did not discuss the substance - he was in Limerick at the time - but agreed to speak again in the next couple of days. His only comment was to repeat that, in the Irish view, the chance of securing the prize of an unequivocal ceasefire was genuinely there. I simply said that I was interested to hear that but that our own view was a good deal more sceptical, as he knew.

I also spoke to Tony Lake in Washington, and sent him the text of the new paragraph. He welcomed the fact that we had not dismissed Hume's latest approaches, and sounded positive about the approach we were proposing. Again, we are likely to speak over the next couple of days.

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So far, so good. But I will be surprised if the Irish do not come back with major problems.

I am copying this to William Ehrman (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Jan Polley (Cabinet Office), to Sir John Kerr in Washington and Veronica Sutherland in Dublin (both by fax).

Yours ever
John

JOHN HOLMES

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Northern Ireland Office

emphasise our commitment to fight terrorism vigorously within the rule of law, making use of police and intelligence resources throughout the UK and exploiting their successes.

• expose PIRA/Sinn Féin's hypocritical and threadbare attempts to combine talk of peace with terrorism, intimidation (of which punishment beatings are a particularly horrifying example) and murder - a position they have maintained throughout the ceasefire period, suggesting that they remain prepared for the 'long haul'.

• reinforce and sustain, if possible, the loyalist ceasefire, partly by emphasising that union is secure - all parties but Sinn Féin having clearly accepted the principle of consent - and partly by demonstrating what the Loyalists gain by their continued participation in the talks process;

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