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by fax

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John Holmes Esq  
No 10British Embassy  
Washington3100 Massachusetts Ave. N.W.  
Washington D.C. 20008-5000Telephone: (202) 588 6532  
Facsimile: (202) 588 7859

Dear John,

## IRA VIOLENCE

1. Many thanks for sending us a copy of your letter of 14 October to Ken Lindsay.
2. We had a word about these two (mis)perceptions when you were here on Friday. From the Washington perspective, there is reason to distinguish between them. The view that the IRA went back to violence because the British Government dragged its feet for 17 months is indeed widely held here. It has been creeping into too many columns and editorials, and becoming part of the historical acquis. You may like to glance at the attached letter I sent Mary McGrory of the Washington Post last month, and intend to use as a quarry for other missives as necessary.
3. The suggestion that the South Quay bomb pushed us into issuing the 28 February communique on all-party talks causes us less trouble here. In fact, we got a good deal of credit for going ahead with the announcement despite South Quay. But Americans are concerned that the Provisionals believe this line, and that it allows those who advocate continuing with terrorism to claim that it advances the Nationalist agenda. The real need therefore - as you discussed with Lake - is how to persuade the bombers themselves that violence doesn't pay.

Yours ever,

Peter.

Peter Westmacott

cc: Ken Lindsay Esq, NIO