

DESK IMMEDIATE

C.C PS/Secretary of State L,B
PS/Sir John Wheeler L,B
PS/Michael Ancram L,B
PS/PUS

PS/Sir David Fell

Mr Thomas

Mr Steele

Mr Ray

Mr Bell

Mr Leach

Mr Watkins

MR CORNICK. * Mr Stephens

Mr Hill

Mr Perry

Mr Maccabe

Mr Beeton

Mr Lavery

Mr Whysall

MR WOOD (L+B)

* MR STEPHENS *

- for advice and draft reply to No 10
in conjunction with Cabinet Office.

From: J. Holmes.

To: K Lindsay.

Subject: IRA Violence.

Date: 14 October 1996.

1 ~~Justice~~ 16/10

Richard Clarke will cover
these 2 themes in the Dublin
speeches.

2. ~~Jeff~~

3 PA

RELATED
TO THIS & IRA

CONFIDENTIAL



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

11/62/10
7b/t9/10

14 October 1996

From the Private Secretary

Dear Gen,

IRA VIOLENCE

I have been struck again recently by the widespread conviction in some circles about two related views: first, that the IRA were forced back into violence by our 18 months of inactivity following the August 1994 ceasefire (eg. we did not fulfill promises to the IRA, and we could have convened talks if we had wanted to); and second, that the South Quay bomb on 9 February pushed us into declaring a firm date for all-party talks.

These views are in danger of becoming so embedded that they become part of the accepted history, rather than propaganda put out by Sinn Fein and swallowed by their supporters and sympathisers. It seems to me therefore that there is a case for a clearly argued refutation of both these claims, based on the considerable evidence. This could take the form of a Ministerial press article, perhaps but not necessarily signed by the Prime Minister, or a Government publication of some kind, or a piece by some more neutral source, stimulated by us.

I would be grateful if you and the Cabinet Office could give some thought to this. It might be a suitable subject for the new Strategic Information Committee when it meets.

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

Yours
John

JOHN HOLMES

Ken Lindsay Esq
Northern Ireland Office

CONFIDENTIAL