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PRIME MINISTER**PARADES**

1. When we discussed this issue at Brighton, we agreed that David Trimble should be briefed, after which we would press ahead as proposed in my note of 26 September. You thought also that any announcement should be postponed until after the UUP conference on 25 October.

2. Adam Ingram briefed Trimble on 3 October about the proposed extension of the Parades Commission's remit to cover expressions of cultural identity, other than parades, which might have an adverse impact on community relations.

3. Trimble, although predictably negative, seemed to accept the inevitability of what was proposed. Adam had earlier briefed Lord Molyneux, whose reaction was neutral. During their discussions, Trimble told Adam that he believed that it would be best for us to be as up-front as possible about the issue of the extended remit. In light of this, Adam feels that there would be advantage in publishing the Bill before the UUP conference.

4. I agree with Adam's assessment of the position. There have been numerous conjectures in the media, many off the mark, about the Government's intentions to extend the remit of the Parades Commission. It would probably be best to pre-empt this speculation by surfacing the Bill before the UUP conference. I have circulated separately a letter to you and IN colleagues seeking final policy approval for the Bill. Assuming that that agreement is forthcoming, I would (subject to your approval) propose that either Adam or I make an appropriate statement about the main features of the Bill, including the extended remit, next week. We would then aim (with the agreement of Legislation Committee) to introduce the Bill in the Lords during the week beginning 20 October. I should be grateful for confirmation that you are content with this.

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I am sending a copy of this to Sir Robin Butler.

(John McKervill)

MARJORIE MOWLAM

*(Approved by the Secretary of State
and signed in her absence)*

7 October 1997

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