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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone 0171-21 82111/2/3

SECRETARY OF STATE

MO 19/3J

13 October 1997

Dear Ken,

NORTHERN IRELAND (EMERGENCY PROVISIONS) BILL

The Defence Secretary was grateful for the copy of the Northern Ireland Secretary's letter of 7 October to the Prime Minister seeking IN's approval to the policy content of the proposed new Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Bill.

The Defence Secretary is content with the proposals, noting in particular that the Bill will continue in force the Army's present powers of arrest, search and seizure in support of the RUC.

The proposals to repeal the power of internment and to amend the list of scheduled offences, albeit, in the latter case, less radical than the original proposal, seem likely to excite controversy. As regards scheduled offences, much will of course depend on the detail of the provisions, which I note are still being worked out. When the work is completed, the Defence Secretary would be grateful to know which specific offences it is proposed to remove from the schedule and which others it will be possible to certify out in individual cases.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to members of IN, to the Private Secretaries to the President of the Council and the Lord Chancellor, and to Jan Polley.

Yours ever,

M A VENABLES
Private Secretary

Ken Lindsay Esq
PS/Northern Ireland Secretary

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