

CONFIDENTIAL - PERSONAL



JUST

Top - JEM

cc PB

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PA.

Dear Tony,
PRIME MINISTER

Pine Minister 66/80/97

CRIMINAL INJURIES COMPENSATION NORTHERN IRELAND

John Holmes' letter of 15 October confirmed that you were content with our proposals for a tariff scheme, and reaffirmed your view that any announcement should be delayed and made in the context of a wider settlement in Northern Ireland.

Until we have made an announcement, I do not think it would be wise to authorise commencement of work on preparing for a tariff scheme. The number of people who would be involved in this work is such that it would inevitably become public knowledge. Rather than delay much longer, and because of the lead-in time, I suggest that we might aim to announce before Christmas our intention to introduce a tariff scheme, as part of an interim statement about the comprehensive spending review. While we will be unlikely to be able to neutralise a potentially hostile reaction to these proposals, I will at the same time register the Government's commitment to supporting victims of crime through increased financial support to Victim Support and other more specialist agencies, publication of the Code of Practice for Victims and preparedness to use some of the saving accruing from the tariff scheme for victim related projects.

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*A further attempt by Mo.
She does not address new
arguments for an announcement
now. Continue to say no until/
unless she can produce some?*

*in light
of recent
experience,
this is a
good idea!*

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This is never going to be an easy announcement. Whenever it is made. The announcement on some kind of memorial for victims has been running reasonably well in Unionist circles. I would therefore like to follow this up with this announcement on criminal injuries compensation, underlining our commitment to victims, and particularly to children suffering from child sex abuse. If you agree with this approach, I will write to you again, and to appropriate Cabinet colleagues, when I judge the time to be right to proceed.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'M. Mowlam'.

MARJORIE MOWLAM

5 November 1997.

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