

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

From: John Holmes
Date: 30 November 1997

cc: Jonathan Powell
Philip Barton

NORTHERN IRELAND

I have spoken today to both Trimble and Paddy Teahon.

Trimble was grumpy. He did not like what Andrews had said about North-South arrangements, and the Unionist community was getting very edgy. Nothing was being done for them, and every time Mo opened her mouth she alarmed Unionists more. He will send us written comments on our text tomorrow, but did not sound very pleased with it. He said that we did not seem to have taken much note of the comments he had made to you on the phone, and that he had a real problem about the Council of the islands not being the umbrella organisation for all the other institutions. It could not be just a vague peripheral body.

I also spoke to Paddy Teahon about the IRA point. He sounded genuinely surprised when I mentioned stories that they might go back to violence. He had heard nothing of the kind. But he took the point about the Adams' meeting and said he would talk to his Sinn Fein contacts. I said we might come back to him seeking a greater degree of comfort.

PP *Helen Hopkins*

JOHN HOLMES

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