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LONDON SW1A 2AA

*File MFG  
cLB*

From the Principal Private Secretary

18 December 1997

*Dee David,*

**IRISH PRISONERS**

The Prime Minister was grateful for the Home Secretary's minute of 16 December about the latest position on prisoner transfers to the Republic. The Prime Minister agrees that, assuming the Irish legislation goes through successfully and the Irish can provide the right assurances, the applications concerned should be approved. He also agrees that it would be better not to rush the actual transfers through before Christmas, but to notify the prisoners of the decisions, and to move them early in the New Year.

I am copying this to Ken Lindsay (Northern Ireland Office).

*Yours ever*

**JOHN HOLMES**

David Redhouse Esq  
Home Office