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Ref: BO.2523

MR HOLMES

cc Ms Polley
Mr Sanderson

AC
PB
JB

Handwritten initials and signature.

STATEMENT ON "BLOODY SUNDAY"

This is to confirm our discussion earlier this morning:

- . You/the Prime Minister will be informing Sir E Heath ✓
and Mr Hague today about the fact of the Statement
and the establishment of an Inquiry, and sending a
letter along the lines submitted yesterday. This
should delete from the present draft the reference
to both of them letting the Prime Minister know that
they are content with the procedure (in the time
available this is not practical).
- . You will be letting Messrs Ahern, Ashdown and Major ✓
know tomorrow morning of the action intended.
- . The NIO will inform political leaders and MPs from
Northern Ireland of the fact of a Statement on
'Bloody Sunday', so that they can make travel ✓
arrangements as necessary. This will be done later
today.
- . Tomorrow the NIO and MOD will inform Senator ✓
Mitchell, Lord Carrington and former and present
Government employees (military and civilian) who
should be aware of the fact of a Statement.
- . After the Statement is made the Prime Minister will ✓
write to colleagues as in the draft you have, and
the Cabinet Secretary to his colleagues, about
procedures surrounding the Inquiry.

Part
need to
Speak to
Bertie.

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2. Sir R Wilson has questioned what response we can give on the issue of immunities. The legal advice is firm that it is a matter for the Members of the Tribunal, who should apply to the Attorney in the event that immunities or undertakings are thought desirable. So for the moment the answer on immunities must remain: "That will be a matter for the Tribunal to pursue". Mr Sanderson will be putting a draft Press Statement to you later this morning, and Q and A material will follow in the course of the afternoon. You will want to consider whether prior to the Statement the Prime Minister takes a short briefing meeting (if time permits).

3. Meanwhile, you will be pursuing with the Law Officers a possible reference in the Statement to their advice on the need to hold an Inquiry.

MPakenham

MICHAEL PAKENHAM

28 January 1998

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