

File
JH 17/12.

CONFIDENTIAL

From: John Holmes
Date: 22 November 1996

PRIME MINISTER

NORTHERN IRELAND

✓

✓

✓

Your letter to the Taoiseach and the text went off this evening. No response so far. I have also copied it to Tony Lake, who was on the telephone to me earlier in the day worrying that we were going to do something irrevocable and unilateral. I explained where we were, and he seemed somewhat reassured - although this may not last.

✓

Your letter to John Hume will go off tomorrow, unless there is something cataclysmic meanwhile. I will not bother you unless there is a problem. Hume remains in absurdly optimistic mood, despite my attempts to inject a note of realism into his thinking.

Cranborne spoke to Trimble at some length this afternoon. As with you, Trimble was more concerned about the rest of the text than the terms of entry parts. He clearly fears that there will be a lot of "green camouflage" which he will find difficult to swallow. My guess is that he will be quite relieved when he sees that there is not much difficulty for him there. He told Lord Cranborne in any case that he was prepared to swallow quite a lot as long as we got terms of entry into the public domain quickly.

Sinn Fein are having a big meeting over the weekend in the Republic. The objectives are not clear, but you will see elsewhere in the box an interesting "briefing note" which suggests that they could be talking about Hume/Adams, at least in the margins.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 2 -

.. I attach copies of your letters to the Taoiseach and Hume, and the new text, in case you need them to hand during the weekend.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John', with a stylized, cursive script.

John Holmes

fnor.as

CONFIDENTIAL