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10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

File afo  
11 November 1996

From the Private Secretary

11 November 1996

Dear Ken,

HUME/ADAMS INITIATIVE

Paddy Teahon rang me this afternoon to say that the Irish were still not yet ready to come back to us. They continued to put Sinn Fein under pressure to come up with better language and had made clear that what Sinn Fein had offered so far was not enough. Sinn Fein seemed to be having difficulty with any idea of saying what their "intentions" might be. Sinn Fein had also raised points on the British Government text, "based on a briefing we gave them". But the Irish had told them there was no point in discussing this or going back to us about it until Sinn Fein had something serious to offer on the ceasefire language.

Teahon did not offer any hostages to fortune by saying when he expected to come back to us with an answer. I said that it remained difficult for us to hold the line, but did not press the point.

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I have also spoken briefly to Lake, who was clearly up to speed on developments. He had been hearing optimistic noises from Sinn Fein. I said that we were doubtful that the Irish could come up with language which would really represent a major advance, but were waiting to see. Lake did not press for us to do anything different.

I am copying this letter to Jan Polley (Cabinet Office) and by fax to Veronica Sutherland in Dublin and Sir John Kerr in Washington.

Yours sincerely  
John Holmes

JOHN HOLMES

Ken Lindsay, Esq.,  
Northern Ireland Office.

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