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*file* *R/primary report 10/6*  
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*Re*  
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From the Principal Private Secretary

19 March 1998

*File*  
*27/3*

*See Ken,*

# THE NAREY REPORT

The Prime Minister was grateful for Dr Mowlam's letter of 14 March, proposing that she should announce publication of the report by way of a statement to the House of Commons, probably on 26 March. The Prime Minister has now also had a chance to glance at the report itself.

Dr Mowlam's letter preceded the latest murder of a Loyalist prisoner inside the Maze, and the further supposed revelations by a prison officer to the BBC today. The Prime Minister accepts that it is hard to defend the existing regime in the Maze, but that equally it is hard to change it significantly. This is an issue which needs to be handled with considerable care in the next few weeks. In these circumstances, the Prime Minister wonders whether it is sensible to make a statement on the Narey report alone. Would it not be better to await also the report of Sir David Ramsbotham, which will also be published, and make a statement on both at that stage? How long will the Ramsbotham report take? The pressure for a statement on the Narey report alone may of course prove irresistible, but the Prime Minister's preference is to avoid taking the reports piecemeal if possible, particularly since the Narey report itself does not deal with the latest murder.

I am copying this letter to Ken Sutton (Home Office), Paul Cohen (President of the Council's Office) and Jan Polley (Cabinet Office).

*Yours*  
*ee*  
*John*

JOHN HOLMES

Ken Lindsay Esq  
Northern Ireland Office

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