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From: JOHN HOLMES
Date: 28 November 1996

PRIME MINISTER

NORTHERN IRELAND

As we have discussed, first reactions to your statement and the texts we published have not been too bad, including Dublin's official statement. I fear we are still in for a bumpy ride over the next few days, but with luck it will fade from the headlines. ✓

What I now expect is intense pressure from the US and the Irish to accept their scenario of Sinn Fein joining on 30 January, with this being clearly foreshadowed at your Summit with Bruton. They will no doubt seek to exploit our "guilt" at having published unilaterally. We will have no choice but to resist this pressure, but it will not be easy and the NIO may join in. ✓

I have heard nothing more directly from the Irish, but I assume their meeting with Sinn Fein this evening may have gone ahead. Paddy Teahon will no doubt give me a read-out, if he is still speaking to me.

I attach draft letters to Clinton and Bruton, in response to theirs to you. You may want to sign both, but I ought to run the one to Bruton past the NIO before it goes.


JOHN HOLMES

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