

SECRET - PERSONAL**10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA****S 315 /95**

From the Private Secretary

16 December 1995

*Dear John***PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO NORTHERN IRELAND**

Many thanks for the programme suggestions that you sent to us in Madrid via Edward Oakden.

I have discussed the visit with the Prime Minister. His preferences are as follows:

- the Prime Minister would be very happy to take up your Secretary of State's recommendations that, as one of the central elements of his visit, he should open the North City Business Enterprise Park;
- he would like to attend the Chamber of Commerce carol service at St George's High Street. Should he read a lesson?
- he will not need to give a formal press conference. There will be photographic press coverage of various events, and he will presumably say a few words at the Business Park. Otherwise, he will take suitable opportunities to make "door step" remarks to the media;
- perhaps taking advantage of some of the time saved by not holding a press conference, the Prime Minister would be interested in having a meeting with the leaders of the four main churches. From past experience, the minimum time we should allow for a meeting with them would be 45 minutes.

The Prime Minister would like you to build a programme around these elements. The carol service will provide a specifically Christmassy item, so that we can drop the idea of a children's Christmas party or of carol singing at council offices (which would look rather forced).

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In the remaining time available, the Prime Minister would be content to pay a courtesy call on the Mayor of Ballymena and do a short walk about with him there. You will obviously wish to balance this with an appropriate item in a predominantly nationalist area.

I am at your disposal should you or Valerie Steele want to discuss how all of this can best be woven into the right sort of programme.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Martin Howard in the Secretary of State's office.

Yours ever
Roderic

RODERIC LYNE

Sir John Chilcot KCB

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