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From the Private Secretary

12 December 1995

*Jean Martin,*

**PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO DUBLIN:  
POSSIBLE ECUMENICAL SERVICE IN LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL  
AND THE BELFAST/DUBLIN MOTORWAY**

Veronica Sutherland sent you a copy of her letter of 12 December.

I do not think the Prime Minister is familiar with the back history or the arguments. It would be helpful if you could encapsulate them briefly in some advice to me. That said, for diary reasons alone I must warn that the odds are heavily against committing the Prime Minister to an ecumenical service next year. His diary is already heavily over-subscribed. It would be useful to know whether you would give the proposed ecumenical service precedence, as a call on his time, over a day spent in Northern Ireland. Would it be possible to combine it with talks with the Taoiseach?

Belfast/Dublin Motorway

I would also welcome your advice, and that of the Cabinet Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, on Veronica's proposal that the Belfast/Dublin road should be upgraded. She says that there is a long history to this question.

The rail-link from Dublin through Belfast and Larne to Stranraer and beyond features on the list of Trans-European Networks, on which Brian Bender is our resident expert. Would there be any chance of adding the road link to this list and making it a European project? No doubt that possibility has already been considered.

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Given the European Council and other preoccupations, I doubt if we shall have a formed position in time for deployment with the Taoiseach next week; but it would be useful at least to take a first look at this soon.

I am copying this letter to William Ehrman (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and to Paul Lever, Brian Bender and Jan Polley (Cabinet Office).

*yours ever,  
Roderic*

RODERIC LYNE

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