

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

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*cell B  
press*



*Prime Minister*

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE

WHITEHALL

LONDON SW1A 2AZ

*To be generally aware  
of this contingency work.*

*Not very profound. If PIRA  
try to set (reasonable) conditions,*

*we shall need a  
subtle response so*

*keep them on the 17  
burn front.*

*c: Alex*

*Red*

Roderic Lyné Esq CMG  
Private Secretary to  
the Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON

17 December 1993

*Dear Roderic,*

*Roderic*

*File - pl. return  
Cover Christmas*

*18.12*

**JOINT DECLARATION: IRA RESPONSE**

Your note of yesterday requested some draft lines to take for the Prime Minister in reply to three contingencies. We had been giving some thought to the likely responses by the Provisionals to the Joint Declaration, and one or two related questions which could arise during the coming few days and over the Christmas period.

The Prime Minister will no doubt be aware of Gerry Adams' comments last night which amount, in our view, to a holding response from Sinn Fein. Adams confirmed that he would be holding further talks with Mr Hume to review their own joint peace process, and said that "proper and full consideration [of the Declaration] will take some time and will require clarification from Dublin about aspects of the Declaration". It seems to us here that this response is not discouraging. Since it is to Dublin rather than us that Adams is looking for clarification, they will have to continue to bear the extra weight they have shouldered since the Hume/Adams démarche of 25 September. Our line can continue to be that it is important for everyone concerned to study the Declaration carefully, and that the choice it presents to Sinn Fein is perfectly plain and will not be adjusted. They should not delay before responding

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positively to the heartfelt and justified wishes of the everyday people of Northern Ireland. The alternative is to face total isolation and implacable opposition to terrorism.

The Secretary of State entirely agrees that our contingency lines should allow us to retain the initiative in this matter, without closing off the opportunity for the Provisionals to respond positively in their own time. He also feels that they must not be allowed to feel that they are now in a negotiation. We have attempted, therefore, to draft lines with the Solomonic precision you requested, to cover the three contingencies to which you referred, and some additional variations on those themes which have occurred to us.

I attach these now, with a caveat from Sir Patrick Mayhew that it will be important, whenever the Provisionals' response comes, to deploy our lines with caution. He feels that, if possible, they should not be used before checking with Ministers or senior officials here. It is also desirable, so far as possible, to co-ordinate our lines with the Irish. To this end we shall be telling the Irish, via the Secretariat, how (subject to the Prime Minister's views) we currently intend to respond.

I am sending copies of this letter to John Sawers and Melanie Leech.

Yours sincerely,  
Sir Rogers

SIMON ROGERS

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