

SECRET AND PERSONAL



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

4 February 1991

cam 57ii

Dear Tony,

POLITICAL MOVEMENT AND THE PROVISIONALS

The Prime Minister has pondered on your Secretary of State's minute of 30 January about the possibility that PIRA/Sinn Fein may seriously be contemplating an alternative to violence. He would like to discuss it with Mr. Brooke and we will be in touch to arrange a time. A decision on whether to circulate the minute more widely can be taken in the light of that meeting.

I should add that the Prime Minister is deeply sceptical about whether PIRA want a cease-fire, whether Adams et al would be able to deliver it, and whether we would be justified in paying any price at all for it. He has difficulty in envisaging what the 'imaginative response' might be. He regards the sort of statement envisaged by John Hume (last sentence of para. 5) as well beyond the bounds of what we could accept.

*Yours sincerely,*

(C. D. POWELL)

cc PS/PUS(L) 1 of 3  
Mr Pilling 2 of 3  
Mr Devereux 3 of 3 - M

Tony Pawson, Esq.,  
Northern Ireland Office.

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