

FROM: MR J G PILLING
29 JANUARY 1991

DRAFT

cc: PS/Paymaster General (L&B) -B
PS/Minister of State (L&B) -B
PS/PUS (L&B) -B
PS/Sir K Bloomfield -B
Mr Alston
Mr Wood (L&B)
Mr Hamilton -B
Mr Thomas
Mr Cooke
Mr Bell
Mr D McNeill -B
Mr Durbin

PS/SECRETARY OF STATE (L&B) -B

PRIME MINISTER'S CASE 2049 - DAVID TRIMBLE MP

Mr Morris in the Prime Minister's office wrote to you on 17 January enclosing a copy of a letter of 15 January sent to the Prime Minister by David Trimble MP. Mr Trimble seeks an assurance that there are no NIO contacts with Sinn Fein over a possible ceasefire - in effect, that NIO is not 'doing a deal' with terrorists.

2. The issue arose first in an article in the Daily Telegraph of 8 January, written by Chris Ryder (at A). (Rumours of a ceasefire have been given coverage in a number of newspapers in the last few days.) Mr Ryder refers to contacts, "often self-motivated intermediaries", who are working to persuade the IRA to cease their campaign of violence. Mr Trimble referred to this in his question to the Prime Minister of 15 January (at B). He now seeks a more concrete assurance that there is, and will be, no NIO contact with "Sinn Fein/IRA".

3. I attach a draft reply on which the work has been done in CPL.

Signed: ultimate 'betrayal' of Northern Ireland to the Republic of Ireland.

J G PILLING
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MH/10269