

DRAFT

David Trimble Esq MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

January 1991

Thank you for your letter of 15 January. You asked me about contacts. So far as Sinn Fein is concerned, the Government continues to hold to its frequently expressed view that so long as Sinn Fein endorses violence we will not engage with them as if they were a normal democratic party. Inevitably Ministers and some Government officials will have contact ^{direct or indirect} with elected Sinn Fein representatives in respect of local matters and constituency issues. The way these contacts are handled is a matter of public record.

As to contacts with terrorists, HMG takes the view that there cannot be - and there have not been - talks or negotiations with people who use or threaten violence to advance their arguments. I reaffirm my determination that terrorism will not be rewarded.

MH/10269