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Signed*
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10 DOWNING STREET

7/5/79

THE PRIME MINISTER

As you know, I am today completing the formation of the new Government and I have given deep and careful thought to the composition of our new team to look after the affairs of Northern Ireland.

I have been encouraged by the welcome which has been given by both communities in Northern Ireland to the appointment of the new Secretary of State, Humphrey Atkins, and I know that he will justify in full measure their expectations and their trust. However, it is my special concern that the Secretary of State's team of junior Ministers should both reflect, and be clearly seen to reflect, the Government's determination to pursue policies which will be to the benefit and safeguard the interests of all the people of Northern Ireland. With this in mind, I have asked Hugh Rossi to accept one of the two posts as Minister of State in the Northern Ireland Office, and this will be announced on Monday evening.

When I asked Hugh to take on this post, he was, initially, reluctant but, as you would expect, his strong sense of duty as a Roman Catholic led him to accept it. I am glad and relieved that he did so, but I am anxious that he should receive all possible encouragement in his new task. I am writing to ask if you would be so kind as to get in touch with him. I am sure that your advice would be of great help to him in this very difficult task. His address is: 24 Wilton Place, London, S.W.1.

His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster