

RESTRICTED

Ireland



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

20 November 1981

*Type / a PM M
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17/11/81

Dear Mike,

William Ross MP

Thank you for your note of 19 November enclosing Mr Dennis Howell's telegram to the Prime Minister about Mr Ross. We had received a request from Canberra for information on 17 November and responded the same day: unfortunately, the replying telegram did not reach Canberra until late on 18 November our time, ie early in the morning of 19 November local time. The High Commission immediately passed the reassuring news on to Mr Ross and have since followed this up with further information and reassurance. We have not been able to contact Mr Howell, who left Sydney late on 19 November our time. You may wish to write to him in terms of the attached draft.

*yours ever
Roderic Lyne*

(R M J Lyne)
Private Secretary

M Pattison Esq
10 Downing Street

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DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Reference

Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

Top Secret

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

Rt Hon Dennis Howell MP
House of Commons

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

CPA Delegation

CAVEAT.....

Thank you for your telegram, sent from Sydney on 19 November, concerning information on the situation in Mr Ross's constituency and at his home. I understand that the response to your request must have reached you very soon after you sent your telegram.

I assure you that the delegation's request for information was treated as a matter of priority in London and that a response was sent within hours on the day it was received. Regrettably the telegram, although given priority precedence, was delayed for technical reasons in reaching Canberra. Mr Ross will naturally have been worried about what was happening in his constituency and at home, but I hope that he will have appreciated that we would be doing all that could be done, not only to protect his own family but also to counter the violence and disorder that threaten everyone in Northern Ireland.

Enclosures—flag(s).....