

CONFIDENTIAL

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

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NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE
GREAT GEORGE STREET,
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

Prime Minister

subject to colleagues, agree
points 1 to 4 below:

A.J.C. 29/6.

David Heyhoe Esq
Private Secretary to
Lord Privy Seal
68 Whitehall
LONDON

SW1A 2AT

Yes
MS

28 June 1983

Dear David

MINISTERIAL DEALINGS WITH MR GERRY ADAMS MP

When the decision to revoke the exclusion order against Mr Gerry Adams MP was announced immediately after the election, Mr Prior was asked whether he would meet Mr Adams. He stated that he would not meet a Sinn Fein MP until Sinn Fein had clearly renounced violence. Although Mr Adams' main interest is directed to the Secretary for Northern Ireland, it is open to him to seek a meeting with any United Kingdom Minister. Sinn Fein's refusal to take seats at Westminster is unlikely to preclude Mr Adams engaging in correspondence with Ministers. There are obvious advantages in a common Ministerial line for handling letters from Mr Adams and any approaches he may make for meetings with Ministers.

There are arguments for treating a Sinn Fein MP exactly the same as other MPs. It is even possible to argue that any discriminatory practices should be exercised by the Northern Ireland Office alone while other Ministers treat Sinn Fein MPs in the ordinary way. Mr Prior believes, however, that Sinn Fein's public commitment to support of violence makes it both right and necessary to treat Mr Adams with more reserve than an ordinary MP. While replies to letters on behalf of constituents must deal adequately with the interest of the constituent, the Minister's reply should be brief and formal in style, avoiding any appearance of friendliness. Although the Secretary of State has not publicly ruled out any possibility of a Junior Minister meeting Mr Adams, perhaps as a member of a deputation, his strong disposition is to avoid such occasions and to insist that Mr Adams makes any points he wishes to put forward through correspondence.

Application of these broad principles will require vigilance in Private Offices. Guidance is being prepared for the Private Secretaries to Ministers in the Northern Ireland Departments. Mr Prior would be happy to make this available to colleagues and would, of course, be ready to advise on any particular approach which gave rise to difficulty.

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- ③ The Secretary of State will allow Mr Adams to visit Northern Ireland prisons only to see a close relative. He does not believe that any further recognition of his election to Westminster is called for or appropriate. He hopes that Mr Brittan and Mr Younger will feel able to come to the same conclusion in respect of the prisons for which they are responsible, and officials here are ready to talk about this aspect if it would be helpful.
- ④

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to the Prime Minister, the Lord President, Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, Secretary of State for Defence, the Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for Scotland and would be grateful for any comments by 6 July. If they agree, Mr Prior will offer guidance on the above lines to all Ministers in Charge of Departments.

Yours ever

Dave

D A HILL

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1 July 1983

Ministerial Dealings with Mr. Gerry Adams M.P.

The Prime Minister has seen your letter of 28 June to David Heyhoe setting out Mr. Prior's views on how we should handle letters from Mr. Adams and any approaches he may make for meetings with Ministers.

Mrs. Thatcher agrees with Mr. Prior's proposals for handling these matters.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to the Lord President, the Lord Privy Seal, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Secretary of State for Defence, the Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for Scotland.

A J COLES

Derek Hill, Esq.,
Northern Ireland Office.

NR

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

CONFIDENTIAL



HOME OFFICE
QUEEN ANNE'S GATE
LONDON SW1H 9AT

7 July 1983

Dear DGlee,

A. J. C. 8/h

MINISTERIAL DEALINGS WITH MR GERRY ADAMS, M.P.

p.a.

I refer to your letter of 28 June to David Heyhoe.

The Home Secretary agrees with the approach your Secretary of State suggests for all Ministerial dealings with Mr Adams within Government, while he remains a member of an organisation publicly committed to the support of violence. He is certainly prepared to adopt the proposed line in relation to prison visits as one application of that approach.

I would be grateful to receive the guidance that is being prepared for the Private Secretaries to your Ministers.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to the Prime Minister, the Lord President, the Foreign & Commonwealth Secretary, the Secretary of State for Defence and the Secretary of State for Scotland.

Yours sincerely
Hugh Taylor

D. A. Hill, Esq.

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PRELIMINARY : SITE : Pt 13



**With the Compliments
of the
Lord Privy Seal**



Privy Council Office
Whitehall
LONDON
SW1A 2AT

N. S. P. R.

APL 8/7

7 July 1983

New South

MINISTERIAL DEALINGS WITH MR GERRY ADAMS MP

Thank you for your letter of 28 June in which you set out your Secretary of State's proposals on the handling of letters from Mr Adams and any approaches for meetings with Ministers.

The Lord Privy Seal has seen your letter and John Cole's note recording the Prime Minister's agreement to Mr Prior's proposals. Mr Biffen entirely agrees with your Secretary of State's views on this question and considers that it would be helpful for guidance on the lines proposed to be circulated to all Ministers in charge of Departments.

I am copying this letter to John Coles, Number 10, Bob Whalley, Lord President's Office, Roger Bone, FCO, Hugh Taylor, Home Office and Muir Russel, Scottish Office.

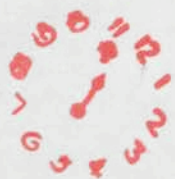
Yours ever
Nick Huxtable

N P M Huxtable
Private Secretary

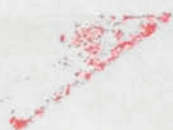
D A Hill Esq
Private Secretary
Northern Ireland Office
Great George Street
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

HERAND: Situation

Pt 13



68 JUL 1983





Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

6 July 1983

N.B.P.R.

on 6/7.

Dear Derek,

Ministerial Dealings with Mr Gerry Adams MP

✓ Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter of 28 June to David Heyhoe. The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary entirely agrees with the approach you suggest. I should be grateful to receive the guidance which is being prepared for the Private Secretaries to your Ministers.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, the Lord President, Secretary of State for Defence, the Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for Scotland.

Yours ever
John Holmes

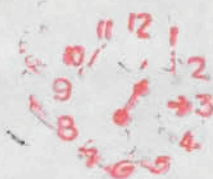
(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

D A Hill Esq
Northern Ireland Office
Great George Street
LONDON SW1

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Inland: Situation Pt 13

6 JUL 1983





SCOTTISH OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AU

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D A Hill Esq
Private Secretary to Secretary of State
for Northern Ireland
Northern Ireland Office
Great George Street
LONDON
SW1P 3AJ

N. S. P. R.

AA $\frac{6}{8}$.

5 July 1983

Dear Sir

MINISTERIAL DEALINGS WITH MR GERRY ADAMS MP

I refer to your letter of 28 June to David Heyhoe.

I can confirm that my Secretary of State will adopt the line Mr Prior has proposed with regard to visits to Scottish prisons by Mr Adams. As to Mr Prior's other proposals he will be happy to conform with the proposed guidance and I look forward to receiving it in its final form.

I am copying this letter to David Heyhoe and the other recipients of yours.

A Muir Russell

A MUIR RUSSELL
Private Secretary

IRELAND: Situation Pt 13

9 JUL 1968

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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 01-~~920 7022~~ 218 6169

D/S of S/PS/3

14th July 1983

Dear Derek,

N. B. P. R.

*MR 15.
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MINISTERIAL DEALINGS WITH GERRY ADAMS MP

Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter of 28th June to David Heyhoe on the subject of Ministerial dealings with Mr Gerry Adams MP.

My Secretary of State agrees with the broad principles Mr Prior has suggested. Mr Adams should be treated formally and with a degree of reserve, though clearly not to the extent of frustrating him in his constituency work. In particular, Mr Heseltine takes the view that since Mr Adams chooses not to sit in the House (where his rights to examine and question the Government are well established), he cannot expect busy Ministers to find time outside the House to deal with just him. Thus we would not expect there to be any question of Mr Adams meeting a junior Minister in the Ministry of Defence.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to the Prime Minister, the Lord President, the Lord Privy Seal, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Home Secretary and the Scottish Secretary.

*Yours sincerely,
Benny Neale*

(B P NEALE)
Private Secretary

Derek A Hill Esq

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