

Lord JOSEPH
Sent. Immed 3/2



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

not ack'd

1 February 1988

I attach a copy of a letter the Prime Minister has received from Lord Joseph.

I should be grateful for **urgent advice** together with a draft reply for the Prime Minister's signature, to reach me by **Wednesday 3 February**.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Tony Galsworthy (Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

(Charles Powell)

Miss Alison Brimelow,
Department of Trade and Industry.

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FROM: The Rt Hon. The Lord Joseph CH PC

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R1/2

The Rt Hon. Mrs Margaret Thatcher MP
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
SW1A 2AA

1st February 1988

Dear Margaret.

I have been made aware only today of the imminent meeting - on February 5th - at which Mr Haughey will be presiding over the signing of a Heads of Agreement with MCL (Mercury Communications Ltd) for a direct Irish connection to PTAT.

You will be well aware of PTAT - the first all-British cable between the US and the UK for over a hundred years.

Cable & Wireless told your officials on January 29th of the significance that the Republic of Ireland is attaching to the signing ceremony this week.

Cable & Wireless feel that a message from you to Mr Haughey re-affirming Government support for both PTAT and for the collaboration between the United States, Ireland, and the UK on this project would be particularly appropriate.

They have suggested a message along the following lines:

"I would like to join you in marking this important day in Eire's telecommunications history - a direct link through PTAT to both the UK and the USA. PTAT will be the most advanced and the largest capacity submarine fibre optic cable system in the world when it comes into service next year. The benefits Eire gains from it manifest the new opportunities generated by the competition policies pursued by the Governments of the UK and the USA. PTAT creates choice for all users and carriers in the Atlantic Basin and HMG is committed to its success. I welcome the Irish spur as an excellent example of combined American and Anglo/Irish Industrial collaboration".

I am sure that if you agree in principle, your officials could improve the drafting in collaboration with the FCO and the DTI. I am copying this letter to Geoffrey Howe and David Young.

Your own

Kevin