FCS/83/116

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE

European Commission on Human Rights: Farrell v UK PM'S BOX Thank you for sending me a copy of your minute of 17 June to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

- I share your view that we should indicate a willingness to contemplate a settlement even though our prospects of achieving satisfactory conditions seem slim. I agree too that we should follow the line in paragraph 6 of your minute if negotiations get underway. If a settlement were reached, the Commission would simply report its terms to the Committee of Ministers without giving any opinion as to the merits. An adverse finding would therefore be avoided. Nor would there be any obligation to change UK law or practice. It should be borne in mind however that the report would be a public document.
- I am copying this minute to the Prime Minister, the Northern Ireland Secretary, the Attorney General and the Home Secretary.

(GEOFFREY HOWE)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office 27 June 1983

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