

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

② cc/pe

**CONFIDENTIAL**

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
WHITEHALL  
LONDON SW1A 2AZ



*Rime Minister*

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON

11<sup>th</sup> June 1986  
CDP  
11/6

*mt*

*Dear Charles,*

Subject to Cabinet approval of the recommendations in C(86)16 for dissolving the Northern Ireland Assembly, the Secretary of State wishes to make a statement in the House tomorrow afternoon. A draft of the statement is attached.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to other members of the Cabinet, the Chief Whip, and the Attorney-General and to Michael Stark.

*Yours Sincerely  
Neil Wood*

*mt*

*for* J A DANIELL  
Private Secretary

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NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

DRAFT PARLIAMENTARY STATEMENT

1. With permission Mr Speaker I wish to make a statement about the Northern Ireland Assembly.
  
2. The present Assembly was set up under the Northern Ireland Act 1982. It has two functions, firstly to consider and report on how a devolved Northern Ireland administration should be formed. Secondly the Act requires the Assembly to monitor and report on the policies and activities of the Northern Ireland Departments.
  
3. The task of making proposals on devolution was undoubtedly made much more difficult by the regrettable decision of the SDLP not to take their seats. The Assembly has not been able to come forward with agreed proposals and there is no present prospect of that occurring. As for the monitoring of the Northern Ireland Departments, the Assembly suspended this work on 5 December. In spite of clear warnings about the threat that this action would pose to the continuation of the Assembly, the Unionist parties have not been prepared to resume this function. As a result the Alliance Party withdrew from the Assembly since they believed there was no longer any useful role to be played.
  
4. On 13 March the Assembly formally resolved not to carry out its monitoring functions, to wind up the Devolution Report Committee and merely to meet one afternoon a week for a debate on aspects of the Anglo-Irish Agreement.
  
5. The position therefore is that the present Assembly charged under the Northern Ireland Act 1982 with two important functions is now discharging neither. On 27 May I invited the leaders of the

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