



Northern Ireland Office  
Stormont Castle  
Belfast BT4 3ST

*cc/c*

The Rt Hon Lord Mackay of Clashfern  
Lord Chancellor  
House of Lords  
LONDON  
SW1A 0PW

*CD 5/11*

5 December 1989

*Dear James,*

Thank you very much for your letter of <sup>*Acap*</sup> 24 November. As you say, it means that we are all agreed that legislation to restore the non-compellability of 'suspect' witnesses at inquests in Northern Ireland should not be introduced until we have the result of our appeal, scheduled to be heard on 15/16 January, but that if the Lords' decision is unfavourable we should be ready to legislate immediately. I understand that our officials are in touch about the logistics of immediate legislation.

I am most grateful to you, and to all my colleagues, for agreeing to my request to defer the introduction of this legislation.

Copies of this letter go to the **Prime Minister**, Geoffrey Howe, Douglas Hurd, David Waddington, Tom King and Patrick Mayhew, and to Patrick Walker and Sir Robin Butler.

*Lonsdale*

*PM*

PB

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PM/SOFS/1348

IKULAND: Situation PT27

