



HOUSE OF LORDS,
SW1A 0PW

PRIME MINISTER

16 January 1990

CONFIDENTIAL

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You may be aware that Lord Lowry, a former Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland, who was appointed a Lord of Appeal in 1988, is at considerable and continuing risk from Irish terrorists. Special measures are in force to protect him, including the loan of a specially armoured car from the Government Car Service for his personal use.

This arrangement has proved unsatisfactory, because he has had to use a variety of spare vehicles from the car service when available, and it is now proposed to purchase a protected car specifically for him. Lord Lowry takes the view that the most appropriate car for him is the Jaguar 2.9, though I understand that the Rover 827Si is arguably also suitable, and is somewhat less expensive.

I am aware of the sensitivities surrounding the use of prestige cars by Ministers and other senior public figures, but Lord Lowry is at serious risk and he has for many years endured much personal inconvenience and danger in the public service. As a Lord of Appeal, he must rank as high as all but a very few of the most senior Ministers. In these special circumstances I am prepared to bear, and defend, the extra cost on my vote. But before I ask the Government Car Service to procure a Jaguar for Lord Lowry, I should like to be sure that this will not cause you any embarrassment.

MJC