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From the Principal Private Secretary

Desk Immediate

- cc PS/S&S/LCS)
- PS/Mr Murphy/LCS)
- PS/M-Ingem/LCS)
- PS/PS/LCS)
- PS/M-Scoble

19 September 1998

- Mr Mathews
- Mr Jeffrey
- Mr Stephens
- Mr Welch
- Mr Harker
- Mr Becker
- Mr Hill
- Ms Schatzfeld
- Mr Warner

Dear Mr Kenny,

OM
21/9/

UNIONIST/REPUBLICAN CONTACT

I spoke to David Trimble this morning to check how his planned meeting with Adams on Thursday had gone. He confirmed, as we had suspected, that it had been postponed. There had been some confusion about the arrangements, and Adams had disappeared to Dublin instead. He was hoping to fix something up towards the end of next week, but diaries were proving difficult to fit together.

to see
21/9

Trimble asked how we were getting on. I said that we were still meeting with the same message, that actual decommissioning was not deliverable now. We were continuing to tell Sinn Fein that they had to do it. But we were also asking them when they did intend to do it and how, since we all needed to know the answer to that question. The Irish and the Americans were working along the same lines. Trimble simply took note, but added that he would be speaking to Ahern next week, since he had not been happy about some of the noises coming out of Dublin in Ahern's absence last week.

Trimble also told me that he had heard from Sean O'Callaghan that the IRA were planning to "close down" Continuity IRA, in the same way that they had closed down the Real IRA. The Provisionals had apparently been angered to learn that Continuity IRA were planning to plant a bomb in Derry to embarrass Martin McGuinness. Trimble had no collateral for any of this, but thought it sounded plausible. I said that I had not heard this either, although I knew that the Irish had moved on to the Continuity IRA themselves, following the Real IRA ceasefire.

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19/09/98

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- 2 -

Trimblé seemed in reasonably relaxed mood. I told him that I thought the standing orders issue would now be put on the backburner, while we tried to sort out the substance (I had previously discussed this with Jonathan Stephens).

I am copying this letter to John Grant (FCO), Sebastian Wood (Cabinet Office), Sir Christopher Meyer in Washington and Veronica Sutherland in Dublin by fax.

Yours sincerely

Pamela Geer

for **JOHN HOLMES**

*(dictated by John Holmes
+ signed in his absence)*

Nick Perry Esq
Northern Ireland Office