

HCS 20: 1866

210/9

RESTRICTED - POLICY

QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

801/97



15 SEP 1997

The Rt Hon Dr Mo Mowlam MP  
Secretary of State  
Northern Ireland Office  
1 Millbank  
LONDON  
SW 1P 4QE

15 SEP 1997

*in the sample*

*Mr Watkins*

*Dear Mo,*

**THE CENOTAPH**

When I wrote to you on 28 August, in response to your letter of 31 July, I agreed that we should defer a decision on whether Sinn Fein should be invited to be represented at the Cenotaph ceremony until the second week in September. I told you however that, irrespective of the outcome of the current negotiations I would have deep misgivings about including Sinn Fein.

I have to say that my misgivings are as strong as ever. The fact that Sinn Fein had been invited to the ceremony - whether or not they accepted the invitation - would be bound to cause distress to many of the people there, and particularly of course to those who had lost relatives and friends in Northern Ireland. I very much hope that there will be a time when we can properly include Sinn Fein in this and other occasions; but I do not think that time has yet come. I propose therefore, unless I hear from you by Friday 19 September, to send out invitations on the basis set out in my minute of 26 July to the Prime Minister.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Donald Dewar and Ron Davies.

*Yours ever,  
Jack.*

*has no copy 18/9*

JACK STRAW

- Pr (S) (L+B)
- Pr (M) Murphy (L+B)
- Pr (M) Ingram (L+B)
- Pr (M)
- ~~Pr (M) [unclear]~~
- Mr Steele
- Mr Thomas
- Mr Stephen
- Mr Hill
- Mr Brooker