

5349/L

19 FEB 1999 x 2 sb/v

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FROM: N P PERRY
PS/SECRETARY OF STATE (L)
18 FEBRUARY 1999

Desk Immediate

cc see copy distribution

PS/Mr Ingram (L&B)

INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF ABORTION LEGISLATION

I attach copies of an exchange of correspondence between No 10 and ourselves, the upshot of which is that the proposed review of the abortion law in Northern Ireland has now been put on hold. The Secretary of State will, however, wish to return to the issue should the opportunity arise over the next few months. In the meantime she is grateful for the work done so far on the arrangements for the review.

N P PERRY
PS/SECRETARY OF STATE (L)
Ext 6462

① file: Abortion

~~① Mr Smith~~
② Miss Boyd
To note pl.
MP
19/2

Distribution List

- PS/Secretary of State (L&B)
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- Mrs Preece
- Mr Warner

(all with attachments)

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From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

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**NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE
11 MILLBANK
LONDON
SW1P 4QE**



Private Secretary at State (L18)

Flaats

John Sawers
No.10 Downing Street
LONDON

17 February 1999
18 February 1999

Dear John.

PROPOSED REVIEW OF THE ABORTION LAW IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Thank you for your letter of 17 February.

Dr Mowlam accepts the Prime Minister's view that the proposal should be put on ice for now. She notes, however, that the Labour Party made a commitment pre-election to review (not necessarily to change) the abortion law and that the approach she has been considering is a minimalist one. She would like, therefore, to return to the issue should an appropriate opportunity arise when the political process is further down the road.

John Perry
N.P.

N P PERRY

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**10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA**

From the Private Secretary

17 February 1999

Dear Nick,

**PROPOSED REVIEW OF THE ABORTION LAW
IN NORTHERN IRELAND**

The Prime Minister has read your Secretary of State's letter of 10 February. He is not convinced that we should embark on a review of the abortion law in Northern Ireland. He sees little scope for bi-communal support for a change to the law and sees little advantage in embarking on a review. I think he would rather the proposal be put on ice for now.

Yours ever,

JOHN SAWERS

Nick Perry, Esq.,
Northern Ireland Office.

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