

24.113 Tom King's letter was copied to the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary, the Northern Ireland Secretary, the Director General of the Security Service and the Cabinet Secretary. It concluded with a suggestion that appears extraordinary in the light of the actual impact of Nelson's activities:

*"... the Irish Government should be made to understand that by not prosecuting in certain cases we may sustain our capability to identify Loyalist threats to the Catholic community and take action to prevent terrorism of that kind."*⁶⁷

24.114 On 12 October 1990 the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Peter Brooke MP, wrote to the Attorney General, acknowledging that the decision on Nelson would be a "very difficult one". However, he clearly stated his position that, "*in his case I do believe the consequences for our intelligence operations of a decision to prosecute will be grave*".⁶⁸