

CONFIDENTIAL

FROM: **BILL JEFFREY**  
**Political Director**  
**8 July 1998**  
**BJ/MR/482**

ASST DB 262/7  
 SEC - 9 JUL 1998  
 CENT SEC

C  
 30/7  
 UNDER SEC  
 9 JUL 1998  
 CENT SEC

Jagdeo

hmg

PS/SECRETARY OF STATE(L&B)

cc

See distribution list

W McC

**SECRETARY OF STATE'S DINNER WITH DAVID ANDREWS: THURSDAY  
 9 JULY 1998**

The Secretary of State is having dinner at the Irish Embassy tomorrow evening with David Andrews and Dermot Gallagher, with John Steele and me in attendance.

2. Mr Murphy had a good meeting with Ms O'Donnell in Strasbourg, and I have had a couple of constructive sessions with Dermot Gallagher in recent weeks. But there is still some lingering Irish sensitivity about the handling of the Parades Commission announcement and the publication of the Sentences Bill. Tomorrow evening should be an opportunity to put that to rest.

2. I suggest the Secretary of State aim to cover the following ground:

- Drumcree and the weekend of the 12th. The situation is changing rapidly, and John Steele may wish to brief the Secretary of State during the course of tomorrow. Indeed she could, if she agrees, ask him to kick off a discussion by providing the Irish with an update. The Prime Minister will also by then have met the Orange Order. The Irish have been notably helpful (much more so, I gather, than in earlier years, with the tone of the Taoiseach's reaction to the Ormeau Road determination particularly welcome, and it would be worth saying so. It would also be worth encouraging the Irish to do anything they can to ensure that a parade actually takes place in the Ormeau Road.



CONFIDENTIAL

- **The next stages in implementing the Agreement.** Under this heading we could:
  - take stock of the first meeting of the Assembly;
  - exchange thoughts on the handling of the next meeting in mid-September - the aim here, I suggest, should be to reassure Mr Andrews (as I have already reassured Dermot Gallagher) that we do not envisage the formation of the Executive slipping indefinitely towards the end of the year, but equally to win his understanding that we have to handle this issue in such a way as to maximise the chances of getting David Trimble over the hurdle of participation in a shadow Executive with Sinn Féin.
  - brief Mr Andrews on the Northern Ireland Bill - I could give a brief account if the Secretary of State wished, and she could say something about the Parliamentary politics. (Jonathan Stephens, Alan Whysall and I had a good session with Irish officials at Maryfield yesterday, so they are in the picture).
  
- **Prisons.** We could update on the passage of the Sentences Bill. The Secretary of State could also, if she wishes, reinforce signals which Peter Bell and I have already given at official level - that it would be extremely difficult for us if the actual pace of prisoner releases in the Republic (about which we have not heard much) was markedly quicker than here, and that it would be helpful to have advance notice of releases likely to catch public attention. (One assumes that nothing is planned over the next few sensitive weeks, if only because the Irish Bill has not yet gone through the Dail, but there might be no harm in asking);



CONFIDENTIAL

- The Intergovernmental Conference. A meeting of the IGC has been pencilled in for 16 July, but I understand that David Andrews has asked whether there is any risk that a meeting quite so early will make life more difficult for David Trimble. I have agreed with Dermot Gallagher that there is a lot to be said for postponing until early September. If the Secretary of State agrees, she could express appreciation of Mr Andrews' thoughtfulness.

4. Mr Andrews is also being briefed on a few prisoners cases on which he has recently been approached, which he has promised those making the approach that he will raise when he next meets the Secretary of State. We are obtaining details of these, and will provide short notes on each tomorrow.

*(Signed)*

**BILL JEFFREY**  
11 Millbank ☎ 6447

**Distribution List**  
**[PS/Secretary of State(L&B)]**

**PS/Mr Murphy(L&B)**  
**Mr Pilling**  
**Mr Semple**  
**Mr Steele**  
**Mr Bell**  
**Mr Stephens**  
**Mr Shannon**  
**Mr Watkins**  
**Mr Kelly**  
**Mr Warner**  
**Ms Healy**