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**FROM: Robert Crawford
Constitutional & Political Division
18 June 1999**



cc see distribution

Mrs O'Boyle *Mrs Devlin*

PS/Secretary of State (B&L)

LD 22/6 *J 21/6*

PREPARATIONS FOR NEGOTIATIONS: CASTLE BUILDINGS

23/6

My minute of 16 June promised an update today on the preparation of Castle Buildings for negotiations commencing on 24 June. As already indicated in that minute, we need to clear levels 4 and 5 of Block B to create space for the Irish and the NI parties. Implementation of this has now begun. Most staff have been packing today and their files, phones and furniture will be re-located to Block A over the weekend. The space created will be fitted out for its new tenants on Monday and Tuesday. One or two officials (PUS, Mr Semple) will not move until early next week.

2. We are aiming to have all of the accommodation earmarked for the negotiations fully serviced and prepared by Wednesday of next week, when we will test all the equipment, carry out final inspections etc. I am particularly grateful for the sterling efforts of Eric Taylor, Barney McGuigan and Paul Lennox for making this possible, and for the patience and understanding of all those moved in making this an easier task than it might have been.

3. The attached Annex sets out the detailed arrangements for Block B. We intend to send 'joining instructions' to the parties on Tuesday, covering the areas set out in the Annex.

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Accommodation for the parties

4. We propose to provide each party with one room on level 4 of Block B. The UUP, SDLP and Sinn Fein will be provided with two rooms each, these parties are more likely to require to bring in other party members from outside for urgent discussions. This is far short of the level of accommodation provided during the Talks, but can be defended on the grounds that the parties (who are, except the UDP, content) now have offices, in Parliament Buildings. With a large proportion of the accommodation having to be given over to the Irish (10 rooms), it is not possible to provide more rooms for the parties.

Staffing

5. We have made preparations to ensure there will be sufficient support staff available during the period of the negotiations. We are assuming that Mr Jeffrey and Mr Stephens, together with the Prime Minister's staff, will generally carry the burden of the main discussions with the UUP, SDLP and Sinn Fein. Running parallel to this, we anticipate the Secretary of State and Mr Murphy meeting the parties, and Mr Maccabe and I will be available to support these meetings. In addition, we will have available Kate Udy (CPL), Tom Watson (CPL), Alan McVeigh (PAB) and Alan Smyth (PAB).

6. Clerical and typing support have also been arranged, with sufficient junior staff to act as runners etc.

7. Paul Lennox will head up the accommodation team during the negotiations period, and will act as the designated contact person for any queries or complaints relating to Castle Buildings on the provision of facilities. We are arranging for him to be supported by a number of junior staff to act as guides, hall monitors etc.

8. We also have available a list of volunteers who can be drawn on at short notice if we need, for example to provide release for overnight sessions.

9. More detailed arrangements such as those for the media and catering are also included in the attached Annex.

Cost

10. First (and very approximate) estimates of the total cost suggest this may be close to £100.00. It is for consideration whether we should ask the Irish to contribute a portion of this.

(Signed)

Robert Crawford
Constitutional & Political Division
11 Millbank ☎ 6591 (Castle Buildings ☎ Ext.22287)

Distribution:

cc PS/Secretary of State (B&L)
PS/Mr Murphy (B&L)
PS/Mr Ingram (B&L)
PS/PUS (B&L)
PS/Mr Semple
Mr Jeffrey
Mr Watkins
Mr Stephens
Mr Leach
Mr Bell
Mr McCusker
Mr Ferguson
Mr Maccabe
Mr Brooker
Mr T Smyth
Mr Hassall
Mr Taylor
Mr Lennox

Annex A

INTENSIVE NEGOTIATIONS: PLANNING FOR 24-30 JUNE: CASTLE BUILDINGS BLOCK B

The following arrangements will be operational from the morning of 24 June at the latest.

Party accommodation and facilities (Block B level 4)

2. Each pro-Agreement party will have office facilities throughout the period of the discussions. The three main delegations will be able to avail of two rooms each as follows:

- SDLP - Rooms 4.26 and 4.27 (formerly Mr Fitzsimons and Visits Section)
- UUP - Rooms 4.12 and 4.13 (formerly CAU and Cent Sec typists)
- Sinn Fein - Rooms 4.23 and 4.25 (formerly Alan Smyth and Gary Smyth)

The remaining pro-Agreement parties also have accommodation as follows:

- Alliance - Room 4.14 (formerly Ms Flanagan's)
- UDP - Room 4.21 (formerly Mr McCusker's support)
- PUP - Room 4.22 (formerly Mr McCusker's office)
- NIWC - Room 4.4 (formerly Terry Smyth's office)

3. Each party room will have two telephones and a fax line. Three lines and a fax line will be provided in each of the second rooms belonging to the main parties. Televisions will also be supplied together with a stand alone PC and printer for each party. All party rooms will be furnished with meeting tables, chairs and desks with numbers of each appropriate to the dimensions of individual rooms.

4. Parties may order tea and/or coffee and biscuits from the restaurant or can avail of tea/coffee facilities in the social area on the 5th floor. Kitchen areas are also available on both floors. Party delegations will also be able to avail of a high speed photocopier located in Room 4.2.

Prime Minister/Taoiseach arrangements (level 5)

5. The Prime Minister and his team will occupy PUS's office, outer office and accommodation presently used by the special advisers on the 5th floor. The Taoiseach and some of his ministerial colleagues will occupy the suite of offices which comprise Mr Semple's office, his PS and support staff. The machine room located adjacent to Mr Semple's support will also be used by the Taoiseach's Ministerial team as will Mr Watkin's office which will house the relocated photocopier from the machine room.

6. Room 5.2 will be retained for close protection staff. A CPU control room will be located in level 4, Block A.

Secretary of State and Mr Murphy/Mr Ingram

7. The Secretary of State will retain all her existing office space on the 5th floor. Mr Murphy will retain all his existing office space on the 4th floor as will Mr Ingram. The Video Conferencing facility will also remain in place and under the control of staff in the Secretary of State's office.

Irish delegation

8. In addition to the accommodation for the Taoiseach on level 5 (see para 5) the Irish delegation will also occupy Rooms 4.5 (formerly Terry Smyth's support), 4.7 (Mr Ferguson's support), 4.8 (Mr Ferguson's room) and 4.9 (the small store room).

NIO officials

9. Accommodation for Mr Jeffrey/Mr Stephens will remain as Room 5.3. Room 5.5 will become a CPL support facility housing Mr Crawford and others. Existing CPL accommodation in Block A will be available to take up to approximately 10 further support staff for the period.

Meeting rooms (levels 4 and 5)

10. Rooms 4.6 and 4.31 will be available as meeting rooms and will be set up as such. It is anticipated that the Irish delegation will wish to use 4.6 on a permanent basis. The other meeting room (4.31) will be available to parties and will be allocated through the Accommodation Officer. A joint Government meeting room is available in Room 5.13 (formerly the Secretary of State's meeting room)

Conference Room/social facilities (level 5)

11. The main conference room on the 5th floor will continue to house the conference table which can accommodate up to 28 people. This

facility, or something approaching it, may be needed should five sided meetings occur during the discussions. These meeting could also be accommodated in the Prime Minister's or Secretary of State's offices if numbers in each delegation were kept reasonably small. The remaining floor space, screened off from the meeting table, will be turned into a social area with soft chairs/coffee tables. Tea/coffee will be available in this area. A bar facility will also be located in this section of the room.

Photocopying facilities

12. The plan makes the assumption that the large photocopier in the Secretary of State's outer office can be used by the British side. The Irish delegation will have the use of the relocated photocopier in Room 5.8. A further photocopying facility is available to parties in Room 4.2.

Communication facilities

13. Staff relocated will take their existing extension numbers with them. New numbers off the Castle Buildings switch will be allocated to the Prime Minister's team, the Irish delegation and all the political parties. Additional phones will be located over the weekend where it is a requirement to do so. Secure communications (Brent phone and fax) will remain available in the Secretary of State's office and in the Prime Minister's suite. Secure facilities (phone) in the Junior Ministers Private Office on the 4th floor will also remain available.

14. Fresh telephone lists will be available when work and testing has been completed.

Press/media

15. In consultation with Information Service, it is considered best to arrange for the media to be kept out of Block B, to ensure that the discussions can proceed undisturbed by any media presence. The media will be accommodated outside the carpark barrier. We have arranged for a marquee to be provided for this purpose, fitted out with phone lines and reasonably comfortable furniture. Information Service are continuing to examine covered areas around the Castle Buildings complex which may serve as a location for the PM/SOS to do doorsteps should the weather rule out such an event at the front door of Block B.

Catering

16. Mount Charles, who provided the catering facilities for the Mitchell talks, are currently on site. However there is now only one restaurant serving all of Castle Buildings, including a few hundred DHSS staff, and officials in Block B. There is insufficient time to make alternative arrangements other than permitting DHSS staff, and those decanted to

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Block A, to use the restaurant facilities up to 1.00pm each day, after which it will become exclusively available for delegates and officials. There are separate access/exit points in the restaurant for Block B staff. Arrangements are also in place to provide sandwiches/meals to individual rooms if required during the day and evening meals if discussions run late.

Parking

17. The inner car park will be vacated completely, save for one disabled official, and will be used by Government transport, Party Leaders and MPs. The outer car park will be given over to Block A and B officials and media parking.

External security

18. The barrier entrance at Block B will continue to be manned by RUC personnel. The outer gate at the road will also have an RUC presence. There will be a visible RUC presence throughout the remainder of the Stormont Estate, particularly at the three main entrances from the public road.

Internal security

19. Only those displaying an Assembly or Block B pass, which must be worn at all times, will gain access to Block B. A facility to produce passes will be made available. The 4th and 5th floors in Block B will be a sanitised area with staff on the respective landings of Block A and C present to ensure that no unauthorised access occurs. It is proposed that we will introduce Hall monitors on the Block A stairwell, thereby giving the Head of Government and their CPU personnel a more direct approach to offices on the 5th floor than would otherwise be the case in passing the Information Service on the ground floor. Hall monitors will also be in place on the Block C stairwell. Consultation with the local RUC Commander, [REDACTED] will also take place at the beginning of the week to organise sweeps of the rooms etc and to ensure there are no other loopholes.

20. We will also have to consider the issue of personal protection weapons in terms of their storage during discussions. A secure facility, guarded by RUC personnel would be the ideal solution since it would be anticipated that all such weapons would have to be given up and logged in on arrival each day.

Accommodation Officer

21. It is proposed that once the details in this plan are completed, Paul Lennox, from Information Services, will act as Accommodation/Admin Officer for the duration of the discussions. Colleagues in CPL will be

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happy to lend assistance, when possible, as well as attempting to provide clarity on issues elevated beyond Paul's responsibilities.

Tom Watson

**T Watson
Constitutional and Political Division
Castle Buildings Ext 22944**

18 June 1999

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