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cc. Taoiseach

Tánaiste

Minister

Secretary

for Nally

for Ward

for Oighins, Mrs. Caden

17 Grosvenor Place

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SECRET - BY COURIER SERVICE

1 November 1984

Dear Assistant Secretary

Meeting with Richard Needham, M.P.

Needham had asked for a confidential meeting because of the debacle the last time he had a "message". We met in his flat and he said the following points were for confidential transmission - at one remove - from Chris Patten concerning the forthcoming Summit. Patten would be in trouble if this "message" leaked from Dublin.

General points

The Taoiseach should go as soft as his convictions allow him with Mrs Thatcher. The Brighton bomb has made her "more twitchy". Hurd is very new and is still "well in the grip" of the NIO.

The Taoiseach should coax her along by pointing up his understanding of the difficulties as they exist and as she must see them, but go on to point up how immensely better relations are than they were only a few years ago; there is more maturity evident now. He should flatter her: only she can do it (it may be flattery, but she is essential). Both Prime Ministers could usefully have something serious in place, and seem to be in place, when they enter their respective elections periods. He could suggest that it should be sorted out by the two of them. A point the Taoiseach could usefully make would be that he has no greater enthusiasm for treating with her alternative than he expects she has for treating with his alternative. (I observed

here that I did not think this sort of thing might be the personal style of the Taoiseach). The Taoiseach should try to nudge her toward agreement to doing it together in 2-3 years. The Irish sense of urgency is understood (and even shared) by many here, but the Irish could blow the whole thing by insisting that she deliver the lot now in one fell swoop.

Particular points of advice from Patten

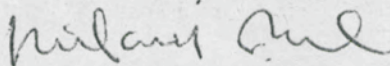
- make her feel more comfortable by referring to the process that would be needed to deliver a settlement. Settle her feathers by showing understanding that it is not all or nothing right now (even if, at the same time, the Taoiseach is in fact bringing her over the line). She needs reassurance that the Irish side understands the need for a process: others round her argue, that the Irish would blow any process toward a settlement because they want the settlement without the process, that the Irish only understand prizes.
- The thing now is to get her to agree to setting up a framework. Don't overload the boat at the first Summit (viz. this Summit seen as the first of a series of constructing Summits). If the Taoiseach's overall message to her were to be no settlement now equals disaster, then there will be disaster as she can't deliver the lot in one go. Some people close to her, having studied Minister Barry's statements at Jesus (to the effect that the Irish Government is waiting impatiently for a British response, and that the problem must be sorted out finally - as the British read it - next year) are worried that, despite realities underlining such statements, they would frighten her off if put baldly as Dublin's take it or leave it offer.
- What about an Anglo Irish Inter-Governmental Council with a permanent secretariat (location not gone into), which would meet bi-monthly? Patrick McRory's document has some "authoritative" material on London thinking here.

- Out of this Summit should come two distinct, balanced elements:
 1. some movement on joint security;
 2. some movement on Irishness (see Kevin Boyle's Dungannon speech which has some good elements on the "Irishness" point).

- The more explicit the Irish Government can be, on making clear that a United Ireland is not on for the foreseeable future, the better. This could be done either
 1. by Treaty, registered with the United Nations, or
 2. by a change in the Irish Constitution.

1. above would be as effective as 2., and might perhaps be easier for the Irish Government. The effect of this would be enormous. While the Unionists might reject any such gesture as meaningless, it would give Dublin immense leverage on the British Government and would give the British Government immense leverage on the Unionists.

Yours sincerely



Richard Ryan
Counsellor.