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AMBASÁID NA hÉIREANN, LONDAIN



IRISH EMBASSY, LONDON

17, GROSVENOR PLACE,
SW1X 7HR

Telephone: 071-235 2171

TELEX: 916104

Fax: 071-245 6961

CONFIDENTIAL

3 October, 1994.

Mr. Seán O hUiginn,
Assistant Secretary,
Anglo-Irish Division,
Department of Foreign Affairs,
St. Stephen's Green,
DUBLIN 2.

PST
PSS
Mr. Murray
✓ Sr. Mansergh
✓ Mr. Dalton
VE 6/10. 5/10

Mr Kelly PA IRA
PA IRA.
cc to Kellie
-to N510

Dear Assistant Secretary,

Conversation with Mr. Paul Lever of the Cabinet Office

Paul Lever is a senior Foreign Office official seconded to the Cabinet Office. He replaced Pauline Neville-Jones earlier this year on her appointment as Political Director at the FCO. I had already known him from his posting to Vienna where he was head of the British delegation to the CSCE. His job in the Cabinet Office involves him very closely in matters related to security and intelligence and his views described below on, for example, the thinking within the IRA army council leading up to the historic statement of 31 August are therefore of special interest.

IRA Army Council

Giving the impression that he was speaking with a good deal of inside information, Lever said that Murphy was the member of the seven-man IRA army council who showed most reluctance in relation to the statement of 31 August although he did not dissent in the end. Another one or two may have had reservations although they, too, went along with the decision. According to Lever, Adams sits on this council. There was no evidence over the last month that dissidents were peeling off from the Provisionals and forming alliances with the INLA or Republican Sinn Féin. As to the INLA Lever said his authorities were not too worried about them; they had some but rather limited operational capacity and no clear political agenda. Turning to Gerry Adams, it was quite clear that Lever shares the general hatred of the man so evident in British

governing circles. He drew my attention to an article in that week's Spectator (copy enclosed for ease of reference) indicating that as IRA leader had shot and killed people and that subsequently, as a member of the IRA army council, he had participated in the planning and ordering of killings and bombings. One might observe, in parentheses, that the Spectator article, headed "Cold-Blooded Killer", comes at a convenient time for the British Government, given the fact that Adams is currently on a high-profile visit to the United States. One is left with the suspicion that the article itself, as well as some of its content was officially inspired.

Lever said that many people in Britain were perplexed at the sight of Senator Ted Kennedy, who lost two brothers to violence, going to Boston airport to greet Adams. A low-key meeting in Kennedy's office would be understandable but not the warm greeting at the airport in front of the TV cameras.

The Loyalist Paramilitaries

Paul Lever said that the Loyalist paramilitaries are not organised or disciplined in the same way as the IRA. They are "a rather mixed lot" with an extremely fragile joint command. He cannot see them holding out very long although there are elements on the fringes which are currently involved in the drug trade, for instance, which may continue to pursue a life of criminal activity. Would the paramilitaries issue a statement in due course, like the IRA, to announce a cessation? Lever said it was not yet clear what they would do but it will be necessary, he said, to have some clarity in that regard to guide their treatment by the authorities. Lever did confirm that the recent arrest and indictment of one of the UDA commanders had complicated matters to some extent. The Prime Minister's recent announcement of a referendum in Northern Ireland had eased matters somewhat but doubts and concern still exist in relation to British policy.

The "Permanence" issue

Lever admitted that, on the "permanence" issue, he does not expect Sinn Féin to go any further. The point will come, he said, when the British will say that, having regard to the cumulative statements of Sinn Féin leaders and the situation on the ground, they accept that the cessation is permanent. There can be no question of lifting before then the exclusion order against Adams. Before the Prime Minister goes public to indicate he is satisfied that the ceasefire is permanent he will need a positive nod from James Molyneux. The clock can then start to run. Pressed on the question of timing for this development, Lever gave the impression that this could happen

any time after mid-October. He nodded in agreement when I added the words "after the Tory Party Conference".

Dr. Paisley

Paul Lever was of the view that many people in Northern Ireland were far from impressed by Paisley's behaviour on the occasion of his last few meetings with John Major - especially the most recent one. Paisley had reduced these meetings to publicity stunts: going into Downing Street, reading prepared scripts and then performing in front of the cameras. Lever felt that a growing number of his followers must be worried about his behaviour and his palpable lack of influence on the Prime Minister or the Government. He agreed that John Major's speech in Belfast on 16 September, when he announced a referendum to approve any package agreed in negotiations, may have taken Paisley and his DUP off the hook.

The Framework Document

Lever felt that very careful consideration would have to be given to timing. If the framework document is agreed in its final form before we are ready to use it there is a danger of its getting into the public domain. He seemed to be hinting that perhaps it should not be finalised until much closer to the time for engagement with all the parties involved.

IRA Punishments


The recent cases of rough justice or "iron bar treatment" administered by the IRA was commented on by Lever. He said the IRA seemed keen on conveying the impression in certain nationalist areas that they were responsible for law and order and that the Government writ did not run in those places. He said his authorities were concerned about this behaviour and were monitoring it very closely. He was not aware of the punishment meted out earlier in the week in Bangor by loyalist paramilitaries to some of their people.

Attitude of the U.S. Administration

According to Lever the British are somewhat confused by the attitude of the American Administration. Clearly they do not want to become directly involved and would be frightened at any prospect of that. The President and Vice-President seem quite happy to stand for a picture with the Taoiseach and Tánaiste and say encouraging things about the efforts of the two governments. A case in point was the Joint Declaration which they applauded but they are clearly unable to offer any

policy proposals of their own and certainly do not want to do so. There was, he said, a profound ignorance of Northern Ireland in the United States, adding significantly that he understood the American Consulate in Belfast was "good", by which he presumably meant that it was sympathetic to the British point of view. We spoke briefly about the size of the American-Irish community, electoral considerations and the imminent congressional elections.

Yours sincerely,



Joseph Small
Ambassador