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SECURE FAX

25 October, 1994

To: Belfast
For: Joint Secretary

From: H. Q.
From: P. Hennessy

Monitoring the Ceasefire

1. The British side (Steele, Annesley etc.) have maintained in previous contacts that the changes in the security area which we sought could not be considered in advance of the Prime Minister disposing of the permanence issue. Now that this has been done we expect that these issues will be tackled vigorously and expeditiously. While there have been some reports of improvements in the situation as regards patrols (e.g. in Derry, Strabane) the situation overall is uneven, with a noticeable lack of movement in the Belfast area.
2. Having reviewed the situation with Seamus Mallon there are a number of areas which require early attention:
 - (i) Street Patrols - as indicated, we note a continuation of the problems caused by uneven responses on the part of individual commanders. There is a clear need for a coordinated approach in this area (the announcement of the lifting of all closure orders shows that the system can act coherently when it is so minded, and that the much-vaunted operational independence is, thankfully, not absolute)
 - (ii) Static Checkpoints
These are of two types (a) border crossings and (b) other vehicle checkpoints. As regards the former those at Middletown, Aughnacloy, Buncrana Rd. (Derry) and Cloghogue serve no security purpose in the present context.

N. Larkin

7/12/2
(27)

cc PS7
PSS
Alderidge
P. Murray
M. Mangan
Colligan
Chis, A.

7/12/3

As a first step the military authorities should terminate operations at these posts, which only serve to cause delays and are counter-productive in terms of relations with the local community. In view of the massive and, to many, oppressive presence of these installations in the communities concerned early attention should be given to their dismantlement.

Following the example at Strand Road, Derry we would expect quickly to see the removal of vehicle checkpoints e.g. those at Mahon Road, Portadown and Dromad, Co. Armagh. [You will be aware that the Garda authorities have removed static checkpoints at border locations in this jurisdiction: it is understood that contact on this issue was made through police channels].

The view of Mallon and others is that early action on this front would have a positive effect in the nationalist community.

(iii) Look-Out Posts

These are a particular feature of the South Armagh area. It is recalled locally that the justification for these posts was that for various reasons the road network had been left largely intact, and relatively few closure orders were in effect. The same logic which allowed the roads to be re-opened should now permit the immediate removal of these posts. Quite apart from fears of health hazards from radiation etc., these posts are viewed as extremely intrusive, capable of eves-dropping on private homes, and resented accordingly.

7/12/4

(iv) Security Bases

Active consideration of the future of the very large number of security bases should now be put in hand. In some cases this will involve the removal of the fortress-like embellishments which have appeared over the years. Mallon particularly emphasised that the look-out post on the corner of the Square in Crossmaglen should be dismantled (the recent strengthening of the base itself in any event makes it redundant). He was also of the view that there was no longer any case for keeping open bases in villages such as Bessbrook and Forkhill.

(v) Emergency Legislation

We have previously conveyed very detailed comments (Rowe submission) on the changes required in the emergency legislation. Among areas to which attention should be given without waiting for completion of the entire EPA review are

- Exclusion Orders
- Powers re. Road Closures
- Admissibility of Evidence
- Schedule Offences to be certified in (rather than out) of the Diplock Courts

On Exclusion Orders we note the reference in the PM's speech of 21 October to keeping the need for them "under review". It would seem desirable that this include, at least, an immediate re-examination of all extant orders. In current circumstances, and against the background of the decisions on Adams and McGuinness, this would presumably lead to the rescinding of the great bulk of these orders. [The PM said there were now fewer orders: it would be helpful to have figures from the other side].

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(vi) Closed Roads

We welcome the decision to lift all remaining closure orders. In order to capitalise on the good-will which this has generated it is essential that both sides move quickly to restore these roads to functioning order. We have sent a separate message seeking an early meeting on this topic. Two points which could be made to Steele:

- (a) the importance of continuing to work closely with us on this issue (it is not merely a technical issue), and
- (b) the need to ensure the provision of adequate funding.

(vii) Policing

The section in the PM's speech on policing was couched in fairly general terms, and gave little real insight of British Government thinking on future arrangements in this area. However, his acknowledgement that "all sections of the community must have confidence in the police" was timely, and is clearly a principle which should serve as a guide in considering the kind of policing service and structure required in the new situation.

Time-Scale

3. Mallon strongly emphasised the need for positive measures to be put into effect on a steady and regular basis. The gap of a month, for example, between 22 September and 21 October announcements on border roads, together with the evident slowness of reaction in other areas, had unnecessarily contributed to heightening tension in nationalist areas. While we had just about "got away with it", a repeat of that approach in the future would be unwise and should be avoided. It was important in reassuring local communities, particularly in Republican areas, of the value of the peace process that the sense of continuing progress be maintained. (He added that the appearance of concessions made by the British Government under pressure and in the face of growing

7/2/6

criticism tended to benefit Sinn Féin at the expense of the SDLP).

4. A separate message detailing problems with the security forces in various locations follows.

A2932

SECURE FAX

25 October 1994

To Belfast from HQ

For Sean Farrell from D. Kelleher

Monitoring the ceasefire

1. Further to my earlier fax of today, you may wish to draw on the following general observations:

Reported lowering of profile of Army in Derry, Omagh and Strabane

Our contacts indicate that there appears to be a lowering of the Army profile on the streets in these areas. There is no comparable lowering in North and West Belfast, however. In the Lower Falls and North Belfast in particular, the perception remains one of patrolling as usual. There also appears to be no movement on the question of the watchtowers and surveillance OPs referred to in A/Sec O hUiginn's fax of 5 October (Templar House, Divis Tower etc).

Paras and Marines

We raised the negative implications of the deployment of the Paras as long ago as 8 September. We note that public concern and apprehension are increasing, as we warned.

Lanark Way

We have in the past conveyed concerns at the access that Lanark Way has provided to sectarian killers and were glad to see that the gates were permanently closed some time ago, against a background at the time of a severe Loyalist paramilitary threat. We would be grateful to be kept informed of any changes that are envisaged in the closure regime for Lanark Way. Concerns have been expressed to us at proposals made in the last day or so for a reopening of the gates. This is an issue that in our view must be handled carefully and with full regard for the views of those who have been most vulnerable in

the past to attacks across the peaceline. In particular, we have been made aware of concerns at any precipitate or over hasty reopening of Lanark way.

Firing of PBRs at Cookstown on 23 October

Notwithstanding the causes of the incident at the Glenavon Hotel, and the culpability of those responsible for the initial attack on the bouncers and hotel property, we are concerned at the firing of 18 PBRs. (Our concerns about PBRs are set out in the briefing note that I sent you earlier).

2. Grateful if you would also raise the cases set out in the attached annex.