



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

**Reference Code:** 2021/97/15

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27 April 1995

confidential

Mr S O hUiginn  
Second Secretary  
Anglo-Irish Division

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4  
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Dear Second Secretary

**Lunch with Boris Johnston  
Political Correspondent, The Spectator and Columnist with  
The Daily Telegraph - 24 April 1995**

Johnston was previously Brussels correspondent for the Daily Telegraph and was recalled to London to succeed Simon Heffer at the Spectator when the latter was made deputy editor of the Daily Telegraph. His own politics would be Thatcherite and Euro-sceptic but he has, he told me, incurred the wrath of the Editor of the Sunday Telegraph, Charles Moore for a piece in the Spectator in February which argued that the Framework Documents were deliberately pitched by the British in the nationalist direction so as to ensure that a final settlement would be much more sensitive to Unionist concerns. He has written approvingly if naively of the Northern Ireland Tories in his weekly column in the Telegraph.

Our lunch took just place before the announcement by the British government that it would commence Ministerial talks with Sinn Fein. It says something for the standing of the Daily Telegraph that he knew what the British government would announce that afternoon and that his Lobby colleague, Phil Johnson, had time to travel to Belfast for Minister Ancram's briefing at 5pm.

Boris made one remark of which you may wish to be aware: the Prime Minister is determined to proceed with the peace process at a pace just a little on the right side of 'stalling'. In this he was reflecting a view widely held by political journalists in Westminster. While the Prime Minister wants history to acknowledge his role in helping to bring about peace in the North he is determined to move cautiously in order to avoid the risk of exposing himself to Tory backbench unrest or outright Unionist opposition.

Yours sincerely

Colin Wrafter  
Press and Information Officer

cc J Hayes Press  
Joint Secretary

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