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Private Secretary
The Tanaiste will mail to me.

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*+ Amb London
Washington
for Sec*

Meeting between the Tanaiste and the Secretary of State for NI
Washington, Thursday, 25 May, 1995

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29/5*

1. The Tanaiste and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland had a short bilateral meeting on the morning of Thursday, 25th May. Officials present included Ambassador Gallagher, Secretary Dorr and the undersigned on the Irish side, and the British Ambassador, Mr. Martin Williams and Mr. Martin Howard on the British side.
2. After some initial discussion about the Conference generally, the Secretary of State gave an account of his meeting with Mr. Adams the previous evening. He had realised the meeting could dominate the Conference coverage until it had happened, so he had decided to do it early.
3. According to his account, Sir Patrick put it to Adams that they were under the same roof and pursuing the same objective of economic development. He had urged plain speaking on both sides and told Adams that he could support the economic objectives of the Conference by calling for an end to violence. The political process was being held up for lack of objective evidence of the end of violence. Sir Patrick said he recognised Sinn Fein's democratic mandate. There was no two-track approach. He wanted to see Sinn Fein in substantive talks. He wanted them to advance "further up the track".
4. Adams had objected that no-one had been put off investment because of the decommissioning issue. Mayhew objected that his experiences in Boston, and the evidence of their Consul General there, confirmed that it was an obstacle. Adams said that progress was needed on demilitarisation, prisons, discrimination, oppressive legislation and other items. Mayhew agreed that lots of matters were to be explored, and

he was glad for that reason to hear there had been a good meeting in exploratory dialogue with Ancram earlier that day. He urged the exploratory dialogue should continue. Adams did not say no, and there was the implication at the end of the meeting that the dialogue would continue.

5. Sir Patrick said that the tone of the meeting had been civilised and there was a commendable absence of fencing. He had found it extremely interesting. He felt Adams projected agreeably until put in a corner when the shutters came down. Towards the end of their meeting, Sir Patrick had stressed the British inability to soften their conditions on decommissioning. If they did so there would be empty chairs.
6. The Tanaiste asked Sir Patrick how he assessed the sincerity of Sinn Fein. Sir Patrick allowed as a fault in himself that he sometimes thought better of people than was justified. However in this case he thought they were sincere. Adams had spoken with something approaching fervour of the risk to them if they failed. Although he had drawn back slightly when asked if he was speaking of physical risk, there was evidence of his anxiety about the hard-liners.
7. Sir Patrick thought he wanted to move, but exclusively on his terms. Sir Patrick thought Adams would have been left with a good impression of the British desire to take things forward. He thought there was probably some degree of mutual reassurance. He had refused a photo, which would play badly in his media. (He added jovially that he had shaken hands, not only at the beginning, but also "perhaps a bit gratuitously a second time" on the way out).

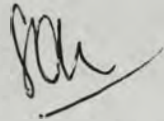
8. The Tanaiste said there was need to "put our thinking caps on" on the way forward. Sir Patrick said this was an unusual situation in diplomacy where one could say there was no fudging. If talks had to proceed without Sinn Fein, so be it. If Sinn Fein persisted, as McGuinness seemed to suggest, in saying that they could not move, then there was an impasse. Sir Patrick thought they could move. They had now met him. He hoped that steady pressure from the Irish Government, the US, etc., would lead them to do enough to provide tangible evidence of decommissioning and to start talks.

9. The Tanaiste enquired if he were refining the concept of substantial progress. Sir Patrick said this was something, that "you know when you see it". It could not fail to include semtex which no-one could argue was defensive. The Tanaiste asked whether if there was some movement, we could be sure the unionists would move, or would they look for another excuse. Sir Patrick said the unionists were not backing away. They were not helped by the North Down by-election and manoeuvring for the party leadership. He felt Molyneaux's decision to stay away from the Conference was deplorable. The Tanaiste agreed it was deplorable but consistent. Sir Patrick said that Molyneaux put self-preservation before leadership. He felt that Taylor had the vision, courage and standing to move forward, and expressed confidence that he would get the leadership.

10. Asked by the Tanaiste for an account of his meeting with the SDLP and the unionists the previous evening, Sir Patrick said there had been a quarrel over the announcement of the handshake with Adams, which had eclipsed the news coverage of the Hume-Molyneaux meeting with the Prime Minister the same day as the announcement. Mallon was forgiving on this issue, the unionists were not. Hume, through a misunderstanding, had not been present.

11. Sir Patrick repeated that he had found great understanding of the British position in Boston, although he had had a difficult time with the Boston Herald. He enquired how the Tanaiste saw future developments in Sinn Fein.
12. The Tanaiste said he impression from the last meeting with McGuinness was that they were strongly committed to the peace process but could not deliver on a gesture of decommissioning at this point. He hoped they were having an internal discussion on the issue. This had been his first sustained meeting with McGuinness. McGuinness had underlined the difficulties saying they would be laughed at if they approached the IRA on the basis suggested. It would undermine their effort and split the movement. All sides should be careful that that did not happen and that lives were not put on the line. It was necessary to refine the concept of substantive progress and to develop some methodology that would keep Sinn Fein engaged. Sir Patrick Mayhew repeated that it was essential that they should know that this was not just a British demand.
13. O hUiginn said that one of the strongest arguments they could use in internal debate would be that a gesture would bring the unionists to the table. So far however we could not say the unionists would move into negotiation even if there was a gesture. Sinn Fein were particularly sensitive to any interpretation that decommissioning would involve surrender of arms to the British.
14. Mayhew and Williams said that they were flexible as to means and were seeking to underline in the exploratory dialogue that an independent agency could be involved.
15. The meeting then merged into preparations for a joint meeting with Mr. Warren Christopher and other members of the

US delegation. In the event this proved to be casual conversation and a photo-call rather than a structured meeting.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Sean O hUiginn', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Sean O hUiginn
29 May, 1995