

An Chartlann Náisiúnta
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10 March 1999

FOR SECRETARY GALLAGHER FROM AMBASSADOR

1. Further to our last phone conversation on the St. Patrick's Day events Jim Steinberg confirms that the White House does not envisage that the President would pressurise any individual delegation in heavy or specific terms. His public remarks will remind the key leaders in general terms of their obligation to sustain and advance the process and stress how much all will lose if they should fail to do so.

2. As to his private messages to the Leaders, the White House will be very much open to guidance by the two Governments. They will in broad terms be exhorting Trimble on the need not to paint himself further into a corner, and Adams on the need for something to make the decommissioning commitment credible.

3. Mr Steinberg said he would hope to be in touch with Downing Street and the Taoiseach's Department (Mr Teahon) on the fine tuning of the private message to the respective parties. They would be anxious that these messages should dovetail exactly with the Government's tactics.

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4. He said he has already stressed to Mo Mowlam's office the importance of staying firm on launching the d'Hondt mechanism at the end of the month. He would propose to remind the Sinn Féin leader that this involved the Governments taking a leap into an unpredictable situation which had the potential to backfire on them and that it would be in Sinn Féin's interest, as well as everybody elses, to do everything possible to ensure that it did not.

5. I stressed that the intensive contacts between the Governments and with the parties meant that tactical details could shift very rapidly and encouraged his plans for the closest possible consultation with the two Governments before the President's meeting with the key part leaders.

(**Note**: We are reporting separately that the White House now suggests that the presentation of shamrock take place in the Rose Garden after the Speaker's lunch and that the meeting with the Taoiseach in the Oval Office would follow thereafter).

END

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