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PSCC Group 2 Section

14 SEP 1999

**Patten Report: Conversation with Secretary of State, 13 September 1999** 2/P 3/A..

SEEN BY TAOISEACH

During a short conversation with Dermot Gallagher and other officials at Castle Buildings this afternoon, the Secretary of State made a number of points about the implementation of the Patten Report.

Taoiseach
You will be interested generally but specifically re X, page 2.

She has initiated an intensive series of meetings with the parties, the police associations and other interests (she is meeting Gerry Adams this evening). She did not comment on the views of the main unionist and nationalist parties, but said that the PUP and UDP had been very positive, and that the Chief Constable had been "courageous", going beyond what she had expected.

WEDNESDAY, 15 SEP 1999

In meeting the NI Police Federation on Friday, she had had "5 ½ minutes" of grief about the proposed changes to the name, symbols etc, but thereafter discussion had been entirely about the redundancy package (she hinted that it could be more generous than Patten's calculations had assumed). Otherwise, the position of the Full Time Reserve was a particularly neuralgic point.

She had already spoken twice to the Treasury and once to Downing Street. The initial reaction of the Treasury was quite positive, but it had suggested that more money would be available in 2001 and thereafter than over the next two years. She felt that this could be worked on and improved.

Her current thinking is that the statement she plans to make in November should feature a timetable for implementation, covering the short, medium and long terms. Her current expectation was that she might not be able to announce reforms which would come into immediate effect from the date of the statement, but that it should be possible to promise very speedy action indeed on a number of matters, in particular those requiring neither legislation nor large-scale spending. Others could be set out as

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issues for the medium or longer terms. She said it would be very helpful to have our views on which matters could be advanced most quickly, mentioning the selection of a possible oversight commissioner and of recruitment consultants, while making clear her view that the negotiation of the redundancy package would be a priority.

At yesterday's hurling final she had discussed Rule 21 with Liam Mulvihill, Joe McDonagh and others. She understood that there might not be a statement from the GAA until after she had made her own statement confirming implementation. While there had been mention of the issue being addressed at the regular session of Congress in April, she wondered if an earlier special meeting might be possible.

Rory Montgomery

13 September 1999

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