

188/12

F.R.

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- CC: PS/SOS (B&L) - M
- PS/Mr Scott (B&L) - M
- PS/PUS (B&L) - M
- PS/Mr Bloodfield ✓ *KAB 12/12*
- Mr Brennan - M
- Mr Bourn
- Mr Buxton
- Mr Burns - M
- Mr Merifield
- Mr Gilliland
- Mr Lyon - M
- Mr Bickham - M
- Mr K Carlisle - M

Mr Coulson

2 SEC 11

RECLOSURE OF CROSS BORDER ROADS

The Secretary of State has considered your submission of 6 December and Mr Lyon's of 7 December about the proposed reclosures of Gortoral Bridge (L54) and Leitrim Bridge (L39).

2. The Secretary of State is ready to take, on sound security grounds, decisions which may annoy the Irish Government. But he is conscious of the fact that Mr Barry had made specific representations about Gortoral Bridge and that, at the Summit, he had told Mr Barry that work had begun on border footbridges. The Secretary of State therefore feels that it is not in HMGs interests for him to lay himself open to the accusation of having misled Mr Barry on this point. The Secretary of State would therefore prefer to go for the alternative approach canvassed in Mr Lyon's minute, of placing a Braithwaite tank across the bridge in as securely established a manner as possible.

3. The Secretary of State wishes for the Irish Government to be informed of the action we are taking at Gortoral Bridge and the reasons for it, including a reference to the conversation he had with Mr Barry at the Summit.

4. The Secretary of State is content for you to proceed with the reclosure of Leitrim Bridge.

5. I would be grateful if you would now arrange, with Mr Lyon, for the Irish Government to be informed of these decisions about the two

F.R.

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bridges. The Secretary of State will wish to be kept informed of the Irish Government's reaction and of progress in providing a footbridge at L54.

6. The Secretary of State has not, at the time of dictating this minute, signed the Order enclosed with your submission. We spoke and you explained that it will be necessary for him to do so before the security forces could take any action. I shall invite the Secretary of State to sign the Order overnight, pointing out to him that it authorises the security forces to close the crossing to vehicular traffic only. This reflects the Secretary of State's decision that the crossing should not be closed to pedestrian access.

RPC

R P CLEASBY  
Private Secretary

11 December 1984

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