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FROM: M T H MAXWELL  
AS CENT SEC  
DATE: 1 JUNE 1994

cc PS/PUS (B & L) - B  
PS/Mr Fell - B  
Mr Legge - B  
Mr Thomas - B  
Mr Bell - B  
Mr Blackwell - B  
Mr Watkins - B

Introduction

PS/SECRETARY OF STATE (B & L) - B

VVIP BRIEFING

I attach an amended script of the presentation to be given to HRH The Prince of Wales, to take account of the change in order which the Secretary of State has requested.

[Signed: MTHM]

M T H MAXWELL  
CENTRAL SECRETARIAT

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PRESENTATION TO HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES

Your Royal Highness

Overview

Introduction  
The Government's main goal in Northern Ireland is simple enough.

1. First of all, welcome to Old Admiralty Building. We very much appreciate your interest in Northern Ireland matters, and we are delighted to have the opportunity to explain, in broad terms, how we operate the Government's policies in Northern Ireland.
2. May I begin by introducing the senior officials who will be contributing to this presentation. First may I introduce Mr David Fell, Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service and Second Permanent Secretary at the Northern Ireland Office, who is my principal adviser on what we call transferred matters ie matters which are administered under Direct Rule by the 6 Northern Ireland Departments. Secondly, we have Mr Michael Legge who is the Deputy Under Secretary at the NIO in charge of security policy. And finally, I would like to introduce Mr Quentin Thomas, who heads up the political side of the office.
3. What we would like to do over the next half hour or so, if your Royal Highness is content, is to give you a broad flavour of HMG's policies in Northern Ireland without going into too much detail. I shall lead off with a broad overview of our policies: Mr Fell will then say a few words about our economic and social policies. Mr Legge and Mr Thomas will then each say a few words about the

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operation of our security and political policies. We will then have time for a question and answer session at the end of the presentation. It exists to help me and terrorist violence through:

Overview

4. First, the overview. The Government's main goal in Northern Ireland is simple enough. We seek peace, stability, reconciliation and prosperity for the people of Northern Ireland.
5. How do we seek to achieve this? Through
  - a. promoting agreement among all the people who inhabit the island of Ireland and working together with the Irish Government to that end;
  - b. pursuing a co-ordinated and coherent approach to all aspects of Government policy which recognises that the fundamental political, security and economic and social problems of Northern Ireland are closely inter-related; and
  - c. administering policies which are informed by the principles of equality of opportunity, equity of treatment and parity of esteem, and irrespective of political, cultural or religious affiliation or gender.

We are also committed to uphold the democratic wish of a greater number of people of Northern Ireland on the issue of whether they prefer to support the Union with the rest of the United Kingdom or a sovereign United Ireland.

6. As regards the Northern Ireland Office itself it

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exists to support me in taking forward the Government's policies in Northern Ireland. I would summarise its aims as follows. First it exists to help me end terrorist violence through:

- a. an effective security policy which is seen to be both fair and firm, and which has, as its central objective, winning and retaining the confidence of all sections of the community in the security forces;
  - b. maintaining and encouraging political and community pressure on the terrorists for a permanent cessation of violence; and
  - c. operating complementary political and socio-economic policies.
7. Secondly, it supports me in encouraging, facilitating and enabling the negotiation over a period of time of a comprehensive political agreement, embracing the totality of relationships in the United Kingdom and Ireland (the 3 stranded relationship) through a process of dialogue and co-operation based on full respect for the rights and identities of both traditions in Ireland.
8. And finally, in collaboration with the 6 Northern Ireland Departments, to help me to:

- a. ensure that Northern Ireland shares fully in the economic development of the United Kingdom as a whole while maximising economic opportunities within Northern Ireland;
- b. eliminate unfair discrimination, in particular on political or religious grounds;

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A. ~~State~~ c. promote a more diverse, pluralist and tolerant society with parity of esteem for its various traditions. of the briefing I will cover the threat from the paramilitary forces; the response by the

SLIDE 1 \* 9. I mentioned at the beginning that we seek to pursue this set of policies in a co-ordinated and coherent fashion. As Secretary of State for Northern Ireland I am perhaps in a unique position within Cabinet in that I have responsibility for the whole range of Government policies in Northern Ireland. I see it as vital that from both a policy and administrative perspective there is a high degree of complementarity and co-ordination within the Government system to ensure that our policies are operated as a whole, a package as it were. For it is clear that what we do on the security front could well impact on our political and socio-economic policies. Equally, by alleviating social and economic disadvantage, we can reduce disaffection within certain parts of the community which makes it easier to pursue an effective security policy against the terrorist which in turn might make it easier to find an acceptable political agreement. Our policies are therefore inseparably and inextricably inter-linked.

- SLIDE 2 10. And, at this point perhaps I could hand over to Michael Legge who will explain in a little more detail our security policies. Michael. Crossmaglen, March 94)
- SLIDE 3 \* Mark 16 horizontal mortar/PALC (Bascom attack, February 94)
- SLIDE 4 \* Car bomb (MIFSL - 3,500lb; no significant attacks since last summer)
- SLIDE 5 \* Sniper (20 victims); coffee-jar grenades; incendiary device (E13a damage this year)



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SLIDE 7

A. Security Policy If a loyalist threat is concerned, there are two main groupings, the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). In this section of the briefing I will cover the threat from the paramilitary forces; the response by the security forces; and the legal framework within which the forces operate.

SLIDE 1

2. Turning first to the threat. \* The Provisional IRA (PIRA) remains by far the most significant and capable paramilitary force. Numbers shown on slide. Other significant republican grouping is the much smaller but more extreme and violent Irish National Liberation Army (INLA). PIRA's campaign of violence has an ultimate objective which is political rather than military: to force a British withdrawal from Northern Ireland.

SLIDE 2

3. \* While PIRA's capabilities have been eroded somewhat in recent years, and there are some signs of war-weariness and declining support, it remains dangerous, well-equipped and capable of striking at a wide range of targets. Particularly high threat in certain areas notably South Armagh and West Belfast. Slide shows number of attacks since beginning of last year. No significant diminution since Joint Declaration in December; recent increase, focussed particularly on security forces.

SLIDE 10

4. Main types of threat are:

SLIDE 3

\* Mark 15 mortar ("barrack buster" - Crossmaglen, pres March 94)

SLIDE 4

\* Mark 16 horizontal mortar/PRIG (Beacom attack, (inc February 94) in Royal Irish (Home Service) units)

SLIDE 5

\* Car bomb (NIFSL - 3,500lb; no significant attacks grow since last summer)

SLIDE 6

\* Sniper (20 victims); coffee-jar grenade; incendiary device (£18m damage this year). With the Services acting in support as necessary.

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SLIDE 7

5. \* As far as the loyalist threat is concerned, there are two main groupings, the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and the still more extreme Ulster Freedom Fighters. Numbers shown on slide. Loyalist terrorists were very active in the 1970s, but during much of the 1980s they

SLIDE 8

were more or less moribund. \* The last 3-4 years, however, has seen a sharp resurgence in loyalist violence, reflecting in part growing anxiety in loyalist working class areas over perceived political gain by the Nationalists. In 1985 they were responsible for only 11% of terrorist murders; in the past two years they have killed more people than republicans.

SLIDE 9

6. \* While they have made efforts to target republican activists, the great majority of victims are random sectarian murders of ordinary Catholics uninvolved in politics, mostly by close-quarters shootings. (Sean Graham Bookmakers February 1992 - 5 killed by UVF.)

SLIDE 10

7. \* In sum, while the security situation is a great deal more stable than in the 1970s, terrorist murders are still running at between 50-100 a year, about 10% of which are members of the security forces. Still very widespread determination in PIRA to maintain their campaign of violence; loyalists likely to continue to respond to this, particularly if they perceive a "sell-out" of their interests.

SLIDE 11

8. \* In response to this threat, the Security Forces at present comprise just over 13,000 policemen (including 4,600 reservists) and almost 19,000 Service personnel (including 5,600 in Royal Irish (Home Service) units - the former UDR now an integral part of the Army). The growth of RUC numbers and corresponding drop in the Army since the 1970s reflects the clear lead by the police in preventing and investigating terrorist crime, with the Services acting in support as necessary.

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9. However the Army were increased by two battalions in 1992, bringing the total of regular Army units to 18 (6 on two year accompanied tours, 6 on 6 month roulement and 6 Royal Irish (Home Service)). This has enabled overall activity levels to be increased; provided a capacity for surge operations without external reinforcement; more manageable work rates for all units; and an alignment of police and Army units. It places a considerable burden on the Armed Forces because of overstretch. There is, however, no doubt that the support provided by the Army Forces to the RUC is essential in combatting terrorism.

SLIDE 12

10. \* Cooperation between the Security Forces and those of the Irish Republic is also crucial. There are 291 crossing points on some 300 miles of border; 102 of them being subject to closure order, the remainder being monitored by Army Patrol Bases and permanent vehicle check-points. Despite this, all round the border, and particularly in South Armagh, PIRA operate on a cross-border basis. Cooperation between the RUC and the Garda has improved a great deal over recent years and is now generally very good. However we are continually discussing with the Irish ways in which it can be made more effective.

SLIDE 13

11. \* It is regularly claimed that the Security Forces are in collusion with loyalist terrorists. In fact, the numbers of persons charged with terrorist offences demonstrates this is not the case. In the last 2 years more loyalists have been charged than republicans. Defeating terrorism within the law is a key element of the Government's security policy. While both terrorists and the Security Forces are answerable to the ordinary criminal law, the legal framework within which the Security Forces operate is provided by two main pieces of legislation: the Prevention of Terrorism Act, which is

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UK wide, and the Emergency Provisions Act. These Acts reflect the special circumstances created by the need to combat terrorism - for example the Diplock Courts where judges sit without juries.

SLIDE 14

12. \* We also need to counter the financing of terrorism. Terrorism is big business - both republicans and loyalists are involved in a wide range of illegal activities. The precise sums are impossible to calculate, but certainly run into several million pounds a year. Curbing terrorist finance, the responsibility of a special unit within the RUC and the Terrorist Finance Unit of the NIO, is a direct means of limiting terrorist military capability.

SLIDE 15

13. \* The end result of much of the efforts of the Security Forces is the conviction and imprisonment of terrorists. The prison population is currently about 1900, 75% of whom have been convicted of terrorist related offences. (The rate of ordinary crime is the lowest in the UK.) Some 260 of these are serving terms of life imprisonment. Despite prison issues having been highly divisive in the past (dirty protest, hunger strikes), we have made good progress in maintaining prisoners in safe custody but also in humane conditions.

SLIDE 16

14. \* There is a complex interplay between security and the other strands of Government policy: security cannot be considered in isolation from its wider context, but equally political and socio-economic policies need to reinforce our security priorities. Before I hand over to David Fell to talk about the economic and social dimension, I would be happy to answer any questions.

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B. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICIES

- SLIDE 1 \* 1. In this section I will deal briefly with our overall economic and social policies. Currently, the total (seasonally adjusted) is 28,000 (April 1994) or 13.3%, which compares to
- SLIDE 1 \* 2. First, a few statistics. Northern Ireland has a population of 1.6 million, of whom some three quarters of a million constitute the working population (that is employed and the unemployed). We also have a significantly higher proportion of long-term unemployed (55%) than in GB (34%).
- SLIDE 2 \* 3. In general terms our economic performance mirrors that of the UK economy. Thus, trends in output, employment and unemployment reflect what is happening in Great Britain. About a third of our output is sold locally, a third is sold in Great Britain and a third is sold outside the UK. that in GB, although it has been falling over the last 30 years. You will also note the sharp
- SLIDE 3 \* 4. In terms of employment Northern Ireland's staple industries were shipbuilding, linen and agriculture. All three have been in long-term decline: we are now much more a service sector economy, with almost 70% of people employed in that sector, including the public sector. Agriculture is still important to us, however, as are textiles and clothing. fallen in recent years as the number of terrorist incidents has fallen, and you will note the strong correlation between the two sets of
- SLIDE 4 \* 5. Recently our economic performance has been relatively good. On the main economic indicators - employment, unemployment and output - Northern Ireland's performance, in relative terms, has been better than that of the country as a whole during
- SLIDE 5 \*

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both the recession (as this slide shows) and also during the upturn (as this slide shows).

SLIDE 6 \* 6.

Nevertheless, our unemployment levels are the highest of any region of the United Kingdom. Currently, the total (seasonally adjusted) is 99,000 (April 1994) or 13.3%, which compares to 9.4% in Great Britain. This figure, however, disguises much larger unemployment rates in some blackspot areas, eg West and North Belfast, where unemployment amongst males can be as high as 60%. We also have a significantly higher proportion of long-term unemployed (55%) than in GB (38%).

SLIDE 7 \* 7.

One of the factors which contributes to high unemployment is population growth arising from our relatively high birth rate, which as you will see from this slide is still significantly higher than that in GB, although it has been falling over the last 30 years. You will also note the sharp decline in the Republic's birth rate which is now below ours.

SLIDE 8 \* 8.

To some extent high emigration levels have acted as a safety valve, if I may call it that, for high birth rates. However, as the next slide shows migration has fallen in recent years as the number of terrorist incidents has fallen, and you will note the strong correlation between the two sets of statistics.

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Economic Policy

SLIDE 9 \* 9. Our major economic task is therefore to provide jobs for the growing number of people arising from our high birth rate, and there are several methods that we use to generate new jobs as this slide shows, namely:

SLIDE 10 \* - encouraging inward investment from overseas. In this we have been reasonably successful in recent years; this slide shows some of the overseas companies which we have attracted to Northern Ireland recently (Montupet, Daewoo, Fruit of the Loom etc);

10. Let me now turn briefly to the social circumstances of Northern Ireland, and the social policies which are - by strengthening the competitive performance of the companies which are already based in Northern Ireland, including building up management and workforce skills;

SLIDE 12 \* - by encouraging the establishment and growth of small firms, and developing an enterprise culture;

- by supporting innovation and research and development;

- by returning companies which were formerly in the public sector, notably Harland and Wolff and Shorts, back to the private sector, and by privatising public services such as electricity and the airports;

- by promoting the economic regeneration of

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cities such as Belfast and Londonderry, and by targeting programmes in areas of social and economic deprivation, and on the needs of the long-term unemployed through such special programmes as Making Belfast Work and the Londonderry Initiative; and - finally, by seeking to boost our tourism industry which despite the "troubles" has fared reasonably well in recent years.

Social Policies

10. Let me now turn briefly to the social circumstances of Northern Ireland, and the social policies which are operated against that background. The first point I would make is that overall Northern Ireland experiences higher levels of social need than other territories of the United Kingdom. In addition to our higher levels of short-term and long-term unemployment Northern Ireland has a younger, and consequently more dependent population, higher levels of morbidity and long standing illness, higher levels of housing unfitness (although we have made rapid progress in this area in recent years), lower average household income, and higher levels of public sector rented accommodation. In allocating public expenditure resources at national level the Government has consistently recognised the greater social needs of Northern Ireland, and this is reflected in the higher level of public expenditure per head.

SLIDE 12 \*

SLIDE 13 \*

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SLIDE 13 \* 11. Against this general background the Government's policy has been to ensure that the services provided to enhance the well-being of the community are comparable throughout the United Kingdom. In some instances, this means that provision is the same throughout the country - for example, the unemployed receive the same unemployment benefit and social security benefits are similar in all parts of the country. In addition, healthcare in Northern Ireland, (including the recent Health Service reforms), are on a par with that in the rest of the country.

SLIDE 14 \* 12. In other instances, however, for example, education there are structural differences in service provision, though the aim of the Government is still to provide the same quality of education for all. [As His Royal Highness knows] we have to all intents and purposes a segregated system of education: by and large Protestants go to state schools while Catholic children tend to go to schools which have a strong Catholic ethos. There is, however, a small integrated schools sector which children from both Protestant and Catholic backgrounds attend: over 4,000 pupils (less than 1% of the school population) attend 21 integrated schools (primary and secondary) in Northern

SLIDE 15 \* 13. Ireland. The other main structural difference is that we have retained the 11 plus system in Northern Ireland, and some would argue that this is the reason why Northern Ireland pupils tend to perform better at 'A' levels than other parts of the country - 32% have at least one 'A' level compared to 28% in England. It might at the same time explain why Northern Ireland also has more people - 12% - leaving school with no

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qualifications whatsoever compared with 6% in England.

- SLIDE 16 \* 13. The divisions in our education system, which I have mentioned, also reflect divisions in the wider community at large: in some respects Northern Ireland is a deeply divided society. Healing these divisions is at the centre of Government policy, and we therefore have in place a raft of special community relations programmes designed to increase the level of cross-community contact and co-operation, and to encourage greater mutual understanding and respect for the different cultures of the two communities. These programmes operate in schools and through the District Councils. All of these programmes are operated under the direction of the Department of Education and a Central Community Relations Unit, which is a special Unit set up within Government in 1987 to advise the Secretary of State on all aspects of the relationship between the different parts of the Northern Ireland community. We also established in 1990 a Community Relations Council to promote community relations work on the ground, and to provide support to a number of reconciliation bodies which promote cross-community contact.

14. These I would describe as the soft community relations issues. In addition to these the Government is committed to tackling social need and disadvantage wherever it exists, and in a way which ensures full equity of treatment and equality of opportunity between the two communities. The Government has already demonstrated, in very significant ways, the priority which it is giving in this area and to tackling social and economic

SLIDE 17 \*

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deprivation generally. For example the promotion of fair employment practice, under extremely rough Fair Employment legislation which was introduced in 1989 and which does not exist anywhere else in the UK; and area-based programmes such as Making Belfast Work, which I referred to earlier, and rural development initiatives. I must stress that we recognise that there are problems of disadvantage and need within both sides of the community, although it is fair to say that the balance of disadvantage lies within the Catholic community. The Government is therefore committed to examining the impact of its policies and programmes - housing, education, health, industrial development, training - with a view to targeting these even more sharply in the areas and people in greatest need. We call this approach Targeting Social Need and it is now our third public expenditure priority in addition to the other main priorities of strengthening the economy and law and order.

15. And perhaps at this stage I could take some questions before handing you over to Quentin Thomas who will talk about the political dimension.

4. Following partition in 1921, Northern Ireland was for 50 years administered in large part by the devolved government at Stormont. Government was one-sided and, at its worst, bigoted and discriminatory.

5. The resulting social and political dissatisfactions led to a civil rights campaign in the late 60s. This, with the police response, led to disorder beyond the capacity of the local police force to contain. Troops arrived on the streets in

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1962 and the Stormont Government was  
C. POLITICAL MATTERS

6. Since then Northern Ireland has, save for  
1. In this part of the presentation I will describe briefly the political background. This slide shows its key features.

2. As this slide illustrates, at the heart of the problem is a divided community. British Government, with the complete and active

SLIDE 2

SLIDE 1

\*Although it is convenient to use the religious label, the division is primarily political and cultural. The central issue is one of preferred national identity: should Northern Ireland remain a part of the United Kingdom or become part of a united Ireland. (all been remedied.)

3. These divisions stem from history and are manifested in part in the deep attachment to historic events and ancient symbols. Many symbols of British nationhood are, in Northern Ireland, emblems of one community only. The cultural differences run through many facets of society. jointly will bring the 2 communities together in a working

4. Following partition in 1921, Northern Ireland was for 50 years administered in large part by the devolved government at Stormont. Government was one-sided and, at its worst, bigoted and discriminatory. Its key features are on the slide.

SLIDE 1

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1969 and the Stormont Parliament was suspended in 1972.

6. Since then Northern Ireland has, save for a brief interlude, been administered by what is known as Direct Rule from Westminster. This slide shows its key features.

SLIDE 2

\* 7. But Direct Rule did enable the British Government, with the complete and active support of the Northern Ireland Civil Service and the Northern Ireland Departments, to provide a very significant programme of reform. (John Hume is on the record as saying that the grievances which led to the civil rights movement in 1968/69 have all been remedied.)

8. But there remains a local democratic deficit. Remedying this would be good in itself, but will also reduce the scope for terrorism which benefits from a political vacuum. We believe too that running political institutions jointly will bring the 2 communities together in a working accommodation.

9. One of the most significant initiatives during the years of Direct Rule was the Anglo-Irish Agreement, signed in 1985. Its key features are on the slide.

SLIDE 3

\* 10. The Agreement was however immediately seen as a pro-Nationalist move, and it led to Unionist protests. The picture illustrates a Unionist protest demonstration.

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SLIDE 4

\* 11. On the other hand, the Nationalists, with the support of the Irish Government, saw it as a primary objective during this period to safeguard the gains of the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

SLIDE 5

\* 12. During this period the Anglo-Irish Conference met regularly and British and Irish Ministers and officials have, as a result, come to know each other. That has been an important backdrop to current political development policy.

13. Since then, the Government's broad objective has been the twin track one of seeking a political accommodation, which would have widespread acceptability within Northern Ireland, while also seeking to bring pressure to bear on Sinn Fein to commit themselves wholly to political matters.

14. After a tortuous set of negotiations the then Secretary of State, Peter Brooke, was able in March 1991 to announce the basis for a process of political talks. The key features of this are illustrated on the slide.

SLIDE 6

\* 15. On the basis of these groundrules, two rounds of talks were held. Those held between April and June in 1991 were apparently disappointing, because they focussed almost entirely on a set of procedural questions.

16. A second set of talks, held between March and November 1992, were much more substantive. The parties came close to

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designing devolved institutions for Northern Ireland. Strand 2 was successfully started, which meant that the Irish Government, for the first time for many years, sat down with Unionist leaders and discussed the kind of institutions which might be set up between Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic. In the end it was not possible to secure an agreement, for a variety of reasons.

17. On the peace side, as is now well known there has for many years been a secret means of communication with the Provisional movement.

\* 18. At the same time, at least since 1988, Mr John Hume has conducted a spasmodic dialogue with Gerry Adams, the head of Sinn Fein, in an attempt to persuade him to bring his movement into the constitutional process. They worked, inconclusively, on the text of a Joint Statement for the two governments to make.

19. In parallel, the Irish Government worked hard to produce an understanding between the two Governments in the belief that it would serve as a basis, or at least a pretext, for the Provisional movement to abandon violence. These activities came together in the Joint Declaration which was signed on 15 December last year. As the slide illustrates, the British Government set out its approach to Northern Ireland in a way designed to show that neither community had anything to fear from British policy. The Irish Government did the same.

SLIDE 7

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SLIDE 8

\* 20. At about the same time, both Governments also spelt out to Sinn Fein the consequences of a cessation of violence, as the next slide shows.

21. Although there has not yet been a cessation of violence, the Joint Declaration has been done to undercut the Provisionals' public support and the rationale for their campaign. We may be seeing the beginning of the end, though it may take some time. Recent Ministerial speeches, and in particular our statement with a commentary on Sinn Fein 20 Questions a fortnight ago, have been intended to maximise the pressure on the Provisionals.

22. We are now working very closely with the Irish Government and, at the moment separately, with the Northern Ireland parties to secure a basis for a further round of political dialogue. If that were to take place on the basis of peace its prospects would be much improved. But the Government is determined to press ahead in any event.

5. The... political...  
dissatisfactions...  
the late 60s...  
to disorder...  
police force...  
streets in 1969...  
suspended in 1971...  
6. Since then Northern Ireland has...  
brief interlude...  
known as Direct Rule...  
shows its key features.



C. POLITICAL MATTERS

1. In this part of the presentation I will describe briefly the political background.
2. As this slide illustrates, at the heart of the problem is a divided community.

SLIDE

Tribal map  
Overlay text  
Population breakdown  
1991 Census

Protestant	50.6
Catholic	38.4
None	3.8
Not stated	7.3

Although it is convenient to use the religious label, the division is primarily political and cultural. The central issue is one of preferred national identity: should Northern Ireland remain a part of the United Kingdom or become part of a united Ireland.

3. These divisions stem from history and are manifested in part in the deep attachment to historic events and ancient symbols. Many symbols of British nationhood are, in Northern Ireland, emblems of one community only. The cultural differences run through many facets of society.

4. Following partition in 1921, Northern Ireland was for 50 years administered in large part by the devolved government at Stormont. Government was one-sided and, at its worst, bigoted and discriminatory.

5. The resulting social and political dissatisfactions led to a civil rights campaign in the late 60s. This, with the police response, led to disorder beyond the capacity of the local police force to contain. Troops arrived on the streets in 1969 and the Stormont Parliament was suspended in 1972.

6. Since then Northern Ireland has, save for a brief interlude, been administered by what is known as Direct Rule from Westminster. This slide shows its key features.



DE

Stormont Castle

Overlay text:

Features of Direct Rule

- rule from Westminster;
- no local political accountability;
- lack of powers for local government;
- lack of structure for aspiring NI politicians
- acceptable to many; ideal for none.

7. But Direct Rule did enable the British Government, with the complete and active support of the Northern Ireland Civil Service and the Northern Ireland Departments, to provide a very significant programme of reform. (John Hume is on the record as saying that the grievances which led to the civil rights movement in 1968/69 have all been remedied.)

8. But there remains a local **democratic deficit**. Remedying this would be good in itself, but will also reduce the scope for terrorism which benefits from a political vacuum. We believe too that running political institutions jointly will bring the 2 communities together in a working accommodation.

9. One of the most significant initiatives during the years of Direct Rule was the **Anglo-Irish Agreement**, signed in 1985. Its key features are on the slide.

SLIDE

Thatcher and Fitzgerald

Overlay text:

Features of AIA

- NI will stay part of UK for as long as majority wish it;
- if majority want a United Ireland, the Governments would facilitate that;



closer and better  
relationship between  
two Governments  
including improved  
cross-border security  
co-operation;

- consultative role for  
ROI in NI;
- joint support for the  
devolution of powers  
within Northern Ireland  
on a widely acceptable  
basis.

10. The Agreement was however immediately seen as  
a pro-Nationalist move, and it led to Unionist  
protests. The picture illustrates a Unionist  
protest demonstration.

SLIDE

Unionist protest march

Overlay text:

Political situation  
1985-91

**The Unionist Approach**

- protests against AIA.  
Desire to remove or  
change it;
- seek change to Articles  
2 and 3 of Irish  
Constitution;
- willingness to pursue  
devolution.

11. On the other hand, the Nationalists, with the  
support of the Irish Government, saw it as a  
primary objective during this period to safeguard  
the gains of the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

SLIDE

AIA Overlay text:

**The Nationalist Approach**

- keen to safeguard gains  
of AIA;
- prepared to countenance  
devolved institutions  
on basis of parity of  
esteem;
- seeking to develop  
North/South institutions  
as part of package.



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12. During this period the Anglo-Irish Conference met regularly and British and Irish Ministers and officials have, as a result, come to know each other. That has been an important backdrop to current political development policy.

13. Since then, the Government's broad objective has been the twin track one of seeking a political accommodation, which would have widespread acceptability within Northern Ireland, while also seeking to bring pressure to bear on Sinn Fein to commit themselves wholly to political matters.

14. After a tortuous set of negotiations the then Secretary of State, Peter Brooke, was able in March 1991 to announce the basis for a process of political talks. The key features of this are illustrated on the slide.

SLIDE

4 Party representatives  
leaving Parliament Bldgs  
Overlay text:

Features of talks process:

- single process addressing a comprehensive agenda with an inclusive cast-list;
- need to address three sets of relationships: those within NI; among the people of the island of Ireland; and between the British and Irish Governments;
- nothing is finally agreed until everything is agreed across all three strands.

15. On the basis of these groundrules, two rounds of talks were held. Those held between April and June in 1991 were apparently disappointing, because they focussed almost entirely on a set of procedural questions.

16. A second set of talks, held between **March and November 1992**, were much more substantive. The parties came close to designing devolved institutions for Northern Ireland. **Strand 2** was successfully started, which meant that the Irish Government, for the first time for many years, sat down with Unionist leaders and discussed the kind

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of institutions which might be set up between Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic. In the end it was not possible to secure an agreement, for a variety of reasons.

17. On the peace side, as is now well known there has for many years been a secret means of communication with the Provisional movement.

SLIDE

Observer headline

Overlay text:  
Contacts with SF

- longstanding but unavowed contacts whose utility required secrecy;
- exchange of messages followed communication from Sinn Fein in February 1993 that "the conflict is over";
- incumbent on Government to do all it can to help achieve peace properly attained;
- messages sent were consistent with HMG's public positions.

18. At the same time, at least since 1988, Mr John Hume has conducted a spasmodic dialogue with Gerry Adams, the head of Sinn Fein, in an attempt to persuade him to bring his movement into the constitutional process. They worked, inconclusively, on the text of a Joint Statement for the two governments to make.

19. In parallel, the Irish Government worked hard to produce an understanding between the two Governments in the belief that it would serve as a basis, or at least a pretext, for the Provisional movement to abandon violence. These activities came together in the Joint Declaration which was signed on 15 December last year. As the slide illustrates, the British Government set out its approach to Northern Ireland in a way designed to show that neither community had anything to fear from British policy. The Irish Government did the same.

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IDE

Major and Reynolds  
outside No 10  
Overlay text:  
Features of Joint  
Declaration

HMG agreed:

- to uphold Northern Ireland's statutory constitutional guarantee;
- its primary interest is in peace, stability and reconciliation established by agreement among all the people who inhabit the island of Ireland;
- that the right to Irish self-determination, carefully defined, existed  
(new screen)

Irish Government agreed:

- to support Constitutional change in event of overall settlement;
- that the exercise of the right of self-determination required the consent and agreement of a majority in Northern Ireland;
- to work to create a new era of trust.  
(New screen)

20. At about the same time, both Governments also spelt out to Sinn Fein the consequences of a cessation of violence, as the next slide shows.

Heading:

In the event of a cessation  
of violence:

- the Irish Government would establish a Forum for Peace and Reconciliation open to all democratic parties in the island of Ireland;



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HMG would enter exploratory dialogue with Sinn Fein within three months;

- Sinn Fein would be free to join the political process in due course.

21. Although there has not yet been a cessation of violence, the Joint Declaration has been done to undercut the Provisionals' public support and the rationale for their campaign. We may be seeing the beginning of the end, though it may take some time. Recent Ministerial speeches, and in particular our statement with a commentary on Sinn Fein 20 Questions a fortnight ago, have been intended to maximise the pressure on the Provisionals.

22. We are now working very closely with the Irish Government and, at the moment separately, with the Northern Ireland parties to secure a basis for a further round of political dialogue. If that were to take place on the basis of peace its prospects would be much improved. But the Government is determined to press ahead in any event.