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SEC 21 OCT 1994
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FROM : TONY BEETON
TPU
20 OCTOBER 1994

- cc PS/Sir John Wheeler (L&B) - B
- PS/Michael Ancram (L&B) - B
- PS/PUS (L&B) - B
- PS/Mr Fell - B
- Mr Legge o/r - B
- Mr Thomas - B
- Mr Bell - B
- Mr Brooke - B
- Mr Daniell - B
- Mr Shannon - B
- Mr Steele o/r - B
- Mr Watkins o/r - B
- Mr Williams - B
- Mr Wood (L&B) - B
- Mr Brooker - B
- Mrs Brown - B
- Mr Currie - B
- Mr Dodds - B
- Mr Maccabe - B
- Mr Perry - B
- Mr Stephens - B
- Miss Jude - B
- HMA Dublin - B
- Mr Lamont, RID - B

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Mr Maxwell

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

ADDITIONAL BRIEFING FOR PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO NORTHERN IRELAND

I attach a short draft letter for you to send to Roderic Lyne covering positive points to make arising from the Prime Minister's visit and speech tomorrow and defensive Q & A material. Both elements may need to be adjusted against the final text of the speech.

2. Copy recipients will want to note that this can also serve as the first part of a hymn sheet to be deployed and used very widely once the speech has been made.

(signed ACB)

TONY BEETON
TALKS PLANNING UNIT
20 OCTOBER 1994

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DRAFT LETTER

FILE NUMBER

ADDRESSEE'S REFERENCE

TO: Roderic Lyne Esq CMG Private Secretary to the Prime Minister Downing Street	ENCLOSURES:	COPIES TO BE SENT TO
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FOR SIGNATURE BY: PS/SECRETARY OF STATE

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT

Following the meeting of NI this morning I attach some additional briefing for the Prime Minister's visit and announcement tomorrow.

The first element contains positive points to make drawing on the package which the Prime Minister will announce. The second element is defensive Q & A briefing.

I hope that this can be a multi-purpose package - it supplements the briefing I have already sent to you for the visit; it can provide the basis for briefings and guidance for our posts overseas; and you might wish to use it in a letter to all Cabinet Ministers during the course of tomorrow. I think that it can also serve for the Chequers meeting on Monday.

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PRIME MINISTER'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF WORKING ASSUMPTION OF PERMANENCE

POINTS TO MAKE

Key Themes

- Very important step. The working assumption that ceasefire is intended to be permanent moves us a step forward on the long march to the lasting peace for Northern Ireland which has always been our aim.

- HMG's approach based on vision, principles and determination

- Throughout this process - from the pursuit of Talks, to the Joint Declaration, and since the IRA's announcement of a ceasefire HMG has shown that it has a clear sense of direction.

- Approach is based on an unshakeable belief in the fundamental values of democracy. It is the principle which underpins the belief that any change in the state of Northern Ireland must be with the consent of its people, the principle which cannot be undermined by terrorism or violence.

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- The Government will see it through. People knew that the Government had the resolve to see through the fight against terrorism from wherever it came, and that is undiminished. Will also follow through on commitments to consolidate and develop the peace.

- The Government's positive and prudent approach has been entirely vindicated by events.

- Unionists in Northern Ireland know that there have been no secret deals to secure this peace. They know that the consent of the people of Northern Ireland to the outcome of talks will be sought through a referendum.

- Republicans know that providing they abide by exclusively peaceful and democratic methods they can be fully involved in democratic politics and in the Talks to decide Northern Ireland's future, and that the Government will respond imaginatively to the new situation created by an end to violence.

Points from the Speech

- Prime Minister's own continuing commitment to securing a just and lasting peace in Northern Ireland.

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- Prime Minister's judgement that the actions of the Provisionals have been more compelling than their words. The significance of the seven week ceasefire is beyond doubt. The time is right to make a working assumption that the ceasefire is intended to be permanent.

- Providing Sinn Fein continues to establish a commitment to exclusively peaceful methods and that the IRA shows that it has brought terrorism to an end exploratory talks between representatives of the Government and Sinn Fein will be convened before the year is out.

- Basis for exploratory dialogue will remain exactly as Government stated months ago (in 5 November message to the Provisionals published on 29 November 1993).

- Will be through talks process that we will secure an agreed and lasting settlement. When the Talks are over HMG will seek the approval of the people of Northern Ireland for the outcome in a referendum.

- British and Irish Governments have been working on a Joint Framework Document - not a blueprint to be imposed by the two Governments. It will be a set of proposals to serve as a basis for further discussion.

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- Joint Framework Document not yet complete, but when it is it will be published so that the people of Northern Ireland can see for themselves that it is faithful to the principles of the Downing Street Declaration and to the constitutional guarantee.

- JFD deals with relations between the two Governments and their views on possible development of relations between Northern Ireland and the Republic (Strands 2 and 3 of the Talks). HMG also concerned with the arrangements for government in Northern Ireland, (Strand 1). We will publish at the same time as the JFD the Government's own proposals on Strand 1 for public discussion and as a guide for negotiation.

- These will include proposals for an assembly to reinstate local accountability and local democracy in Northern Ireland.

- Loyalist ceasefire very welcome. Principles of the Joint Declaration apply equally to all and show a route to democratic politics open to everyone who announces violence. Political representatives of Loyalism will be treated according to their electoral strength and Government will at the appropriate time enter into contact with them.

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- Objective is to restore normal political life to Northern Ireland including procedures for law enforcement not governed by the need to counterterrorism. No risks will be taken with the safety of the people. Since the IRA ceasefire was announced security forces and the Secretary of State already responded to the diminished threat and this will continue.

- The Secretary of State has rescinded all remaining closure orders border roads.

- As a matter of principle HMG wishes to see free movement within the United Kingdom. Home Secretary has decided to lift the orders on Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness.

- Intend to consult with the Irish Government on considered approach to the depositing and decommissioning of guns and explosives.

- Firm objective to return to exclusively civilian policing. Need for soldiers to patrol the streets will be reviewed as circumstances permit, but there will be a peace-time role for some members of the armed forces in Northern Ireland as in other parts of the United Kingdom.

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- Recognise the role - and extraordinary courage and steadfastness of RUC. An end to the threat of violence will require changes in policing. However, no one can or will be allowed to take the law into their own hands. All sections of the community must enjoy equal protection from crime but must help each community to identify with and trust the police.

- Peace will boost Northern Ireland's economy and the prospect of economic development will boost peace. Will convene an investment conference in Belfast.

- There is a high level of public expenditure in Northern Ireland. Some fear that peace will cause it to be reduced. It will not. The social and economic needs of Northern Ireland are pressing.

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DEFENSIVE Q&A BRIEF

What has changed to allow this 'working assumption'?

There has been 7 weeks without IRA violence. Actions have spoken louder than the words used by Sinn Fein which have not been unambiguous. But taking all they have said with that 7 weeks it is reasonable now to take this next step and to test their commitment to exclusively peaceful and democratic methods in exploratory dialogue.

Exploratory Dialogue

When will exploratory dialogue begin?

We will convene exploratory talks before this year is out.

Does that mean before Christmas?

The precise timing will be something we shall assess against developments. It will, of course, also be necessary to agree a date with Sinn Fein's representatives.

Who will represent the government?

Exploratory dialogue will begin with officials. I cannot give further details at the moment of who those officials will be.

Will ministers become involved?

There will come a time when it may be more appropriate for ministers to become involved. That will be a judgement we shall make as the process continues.

Who will represent Sinn Fein?

That will be a matter for Sinn Fein to decide.

Where will the talks be held?

I cannot give any further details at present.

What will the agenda be?

The purpose of exploratory dialogue is threefold

- to explore the basis on which Sinn Fein would come to be admitted to the political talks process without anticipating the negotiations within that process,

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to exchange views on how Sinn Fein would be able over a period to play the same part as the current constitutional parties in the public life of Northern Ireland,

- to examine the practical consequences of the ending of violence.

Do the IRA have to surrender their arms before it begins?

We have set no further preconditions for the beginning of exploratory dialogue. No-one should hold illegal weapons and their safe disposal would provide some of the most convincing evidence of good intentions. At any rate one purpose of exploratory dialogue is to examine the practical consequences of the ending of violence.

We shall consult with the Irish Government on a considered approach to the depositing and decommissioning of guns and explosives.

How long will exploratory dialogue last?

Not possible to say. HMG intends the talks to be constructive and serious. They should last for so long as they are useful.

When will Sinn Fein join the Political Talks?

That will be one of the matters to be discussed in exploratory dialogue.

Loyalists

Do you make a working assumption that the Loyalist cessation is permanent?

We will judge the Loyalist ceasefire on the same basis as the IRA's. The indications are that they intend it to last, but it only began just over a week ago. We shall continue to watch developments closely.

Exploratory dialogue with Loyalists?

As PM said in letter to Peter Robinson on 30 June 'once there is a genuinely established permanent end to their violence...there might well be issues which it would be appropriate to discuss at the right level, including how [they] might come to play a part in normal political life - perhaps by submitting themselves to the ballot box - and the practical consequences of an ending of violence'.

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What about Loyalists at the Talks?

Para 10 of Joint Declaration makes clear that talks process is open to 'democratically mandated parties which establish a commitment to exclusively peaceful methods and which have shown that they abide by the democratic process'. Political representatives of loyalism will be treated according to their electoral strength. We wish to hear the voice of the people they represent and to pay attention to their legitimate concerns.

INLA

INLA have not declared a ceasefire?

There have been no INLA attacks since the end of August but they have not announced any cessation. They remain a threat and we shall remain on our guard against them. Hope that they will join the growing peace process and give up their violence for good.

SECURITY CONSEQUENCES

When will emergency legislation go?

We have always said that when violence had ended in Northern Ireland the whole range of our responses to that violence would be looked at.

Is the border now open?

Sir Patrick Mayhew this morning rescinded all the remaining closure orders. The advice of Chief Constable and GOC is that the closure orders are no longer necessary on security grounds.

Will watchtowers and other fortifications be dismantled?

The police and the army will continue to provide appropriate levels of security throughout Northern Ireland. Security force commanders continue to review the need for all security measures in particular areas and should the level of threat be judged to continue to diminish further measures will follow.

When will the Army leave Northern Ireland?

There will continue to be a peacetime role for the army in Northern Ireland just as there is in other parts of the United Kingdom. We all - including the police and the army - want to reduce the security presence on the streets of Northern Ireland, but we will do so only when we judge it safe to do so based on the advice of the Chief Constable.

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All the RUC be replaced?

No. The RUC is a highly regarded professional police service for Northern Ireland. Its members have displayed considerable resourcefulness and courage over many years. An end to the threat of violence and changing circumstances in Northern Ireland will require changes in policing.

No one can take the law into their own hands and every citizen must enjoy equal protection from crime. We must all work to help all parts of the community in Northern Ireland to identify with, trust and respect the police.

Will IRA and Loyalist prisoners be released?

All those convicted of crimes and sentenced by the Courts must expect to serve their sentences in accordance with the law.

Exclusion Orders?

The Home Secretary has today lifted Exclusion Orders on Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness. The Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland will continue to review other Exclusion Orders on a case by case basis.

JOINT FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT AND POLITICAL TALKS

When do you expect the JFD to be finished?

We have made good progress in our discussions with the Irish Government about the Joint Framework Document. But there are still substantial questions to be resolved. I want to conclude the Document as soon as possible because I am sure it will help to carry the political process forward. To help achieve this, and to compare notes on the ceasefire, I have invited the Taoiseach to an informal meeting at Chequers next Monday 24 October.

Once the Framework Document has been completed we shall publish it for public discussion.

Separate Strand 1 proposals - basis for an internal settlement?

No. We are committed to the Three Stranded Talks process. The Joint Framework Document deals with Two Strands - North/South East/West relationships. Further arrangements for Government within Northern Ireland are for HMG and the Northern Ireland parties. We shall publish our ideas on a way forward so that the public discussion can encompass the whole range of the Three Stranded Talks.

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TOP SECRET

if you don't get agreement in the Talks will you impose a settlement?

Already made it clear that the outcome of talks will be put to the people of Northern Ireland in a referendum. Always been our position that no settlement which was not widely acceptable could be successful.

What is the timetable for a final settlement in Northern Ireland?

Not something for HMG alone. As far as we are concerned we wish to move as speedily as possible towards agreement in the Talks.

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