

CONFIDENTIAL

*M. G. ...*  
*S. ...*

*PA - 6/10/94*

FROM: R P LEMON  
PS/MICHAEL ANCRAM  
13 NOVEMBER 1996

*1/5*

RECEIVED  
15 NOV 1996  
MUFAX ROOM  
STORMONT HOUSE ANNEX

- cc PS/Secretary of State (B&L) -B
- PS/Michael Ancram (B&L) -B
- PS/PUS (B&L) -B
- PS/Sir David Fell -B
- Mr Thomas (B&L) -B
- Mr Steele -B
- Mr Leach -B
- Mr Ray -B
- Mr Stephens -B
- Mr Bell -B
- Mr Hill (B&L) -B
- Mr Perry -B
- Mr Maccabe -B
- Ms Mapstone -B
- Mr Corbett *ccru 18* B

Mr Canavan *ccru*

**MICHAEL ANCRAM'S MEETING WITH ARCHBISHOP BRADY, 12 NOVEMBER 1996**

Michael Ancram was grateful for the briefing provided for his meeting with Archbishop Brady in Stormont Castle on 12 November 1996. Archbishop Brady was accompanied by Auxilliary Bishop Gerard Clifford.

Summary

2. The meeting, the first with Archbishop Brady since his installation, lasted about one hour, and was intended to give the Minister an opportunity to continue the close relationships built up with Cardinal Daly, to provide Brady with an update on the talks process, and to raise economic boycotting. Archbishop Brady listened but on several occasions offered the Sinn Fein perspective and asked what could be done for them - (Auxillary Bishop Clifford made little contribution).

Detail

Economic Boycotting

3. Following opening remarks about the Archbishop's installation ceremony, the Minister said that he wanted to raise the matter of

CONFIDENTIAL

-1-

CCRU  
15 NOV 1996  
RECEIVED

## CONFIDENTIAL

economic boycotts. He said that his information was that there were n many, but where they were occurring they were painful. The Government had been careful in what it had said and believed that it shouldn't say too much. However, boycotts were doing real damage to community relations and in recent meetings with small businessmen from towns like Pomeroy and Lisnaskea, the concern about targetting Unionist shopkeepers had been highlighted. Many of those victims saw boycotting as a way of forcing them out of border areas and the term "ethnic cleansing" had been used on a number of occasions. The Minister had said that he would convey their concerns to church leaders and so he asked Archbishop Brady if there was anything which he thought might be done.

4. Archbishop Brady said that it was his impression that boycotting activity had died down in recent months. He condemned it as being divisive and referred to the issue as a "running sore". Bishop Clifford said that local priests had condemned this activity locally. The Minister said that he was concerned that if boycotting continued it could lead into other areas of every day life and whilst comments by Cardinal Daly and other clergy such as Father Faul had been greatly appreciated was there anything more which could be done? Archbishop Brady made no offers but repeated his understanding that the problem had declined and was localised.

Talks

5. The Minister provided an update on the current situation in talks. He said that the question of Sinn Fein's entry into negotiations remains, that it was unclear as to whether a ceasefire would happen but if it did it would have to be irrevocable and be tested by words and actions. There were those who had asked about a time-limit on talks, but that could be counter-productive, although a review of progress was possible.

Confidence Measures

6. Archbishop Brady said that of the two wings of Sinn Fein, the military one did not think politically but the peaceful wing sought

CONFIDENTIAL

-2-

129

## CONFIDENTIAL

confidence building measures. He asked if anything could be done in the area of prisons.

7. On prisoners, the Minister said that the Government had shown movement last year with legislation on remission. This had been greeted by 'too little, too late'. There was also pressure from the loyalist side but the Government had to ensure that both sides were treated with equality throughout.

8. The Minister said that in the past a whole raft of measures had been taken with no acknowledgement of them. He sighted Rosemount Tower as an example where many in Londonderry had called for the Tower's removal as a confidence measure, but when the Tower had been removed there was no acknowledgement, merely the familiar cry, "too little too late". There was also a difficulty that many of the Minister's colleagues would require convincing that such measures were not merely being pocketed and were often seen as concessions rather than as confidence building measures.

9. Brady said that Sinn Fein felt they didn't get enough credit for the last ceasefire. The Minister said that HMG had tried to say publicly that it recognised the efforts made. He said it was important to get into negotiations and the Government wanted a fully inclusive process. Brady said that it was all about trust in a democracy and a question of justice. The Minister referred to fair employment legislation in Northern Ireland and to the policy of free school meals in education. The latter was perceived by one side of the community as "sectarian". Perception was important and progress for one community was often seen as concession by the other.

Drumcree

10. Brady said that Drumcree had smashed confidence for a lot of people. The Minister said that he had been surprised to hear of the strength of feeling expressed by many after Drumcree including moderate professional unionists who said that they had felt that they were being led, step by step, down a path to a United Ireland. They had expressed their growing fear that they had less and less

CONFIDENTIAL

-3-

## CONFIDENTIAL

ownership of the current process. Brady said that it was no longer fully accepted that there would inevitably be a United Ireland. He said that there were two minorities on the island of Ireland and there was a question of how to address the fear of each of those. He asked again, did Unionists want an agreed settlement? The Minister emphasised that the Unionist position had changed in recent times and it was now more readily accepted that the safe position was not the status quo and that they had to work within the 3-stranded process. The Minister said that there was a need to recognise just how far many Unionists had come and that Articles 2 and 3 may create the trust and dispel the fear of a "slippery slope".

Ceasefire

11. Archbishop Brady agreed that trust was the key. He added that he believed that Sinn Fein really wanted a ceasefire but they believed that the British Government and Unionists did not. There was a perception that the British were 'stringing along' the Republican movement. The Minister said that if a ceasefire was called the Secretary of State would have to be satisfied that it was unequivocal, and was for good. In the words of the Downing Street Declaration, that they should be committed to "exclusively peaceful methods" and have shown that they would abide by the democratic process. The Minister added the more they could convince us that any ceasefire was "for real" the better, it was a question of confidence. We now knew that the last time they declared a ceasefire, activities such as movement of weapons, training and targetting continued unabated, so it was understandable that some would not trust a new ceasefire and might suspect that preparations for war continued. The Minister quoted John Hume, Bruton and Spring to emphasise that Sinn Fein had to persuade us all.

12. Brady returned to the matter of a ceasefire. He said that many in the Republican movement felt, as he put it, "fool me once, shame on you - fool me twice, shame on me". He asked how can their concerns be addressed. Many of them said that the power was held by British Government. The Minister said that there had to be an

CONFIDENTIAL

-4-

131

CONFIDENTIAL

understanding of the other sides suspicions as well. He said there was a misunderstanding that HMG had some kind of control over Unionists - this was clearly not the case.

Summary

13. The Minister felt this was an interesting meeting which demonstrated the significant difference in knowledge and perspective between Archbishop Brady and his predecessor. Brady is much more of an old fashioned Republican but also seems less well informed. The Minister feels there is work to be done here and he intends to repeat this exercise to continue to explain HMG's position.

Signed

R P LEMON  
PS/Michael Ancram

CONFIDENTIAL

-5-

PRO/96117

TOTAL P.05

132