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DJW/24/5

25/5/94

20 MAY 1994 DB/1074/94

FROM: D J WATKINS
US CENT SEC
DATE: 19 MAY 1994

CC: PS/PUS (B&L) - B
PS/Mr Fell - B
Mr Thomas - B
Mr Legge - B
Mr Bell - B
Mr Williams - B
Mr Maccabe - B
Mr Archer, RID - B

Hidden CC: Mrs Brown 20/5

HMA, Dublin - B

LOYALIST KILLINGS

1. I confess to some initial sympathy with the views expressed by Martin Mansergh as recorded in your minute of 18 May.
2. On reflection, however, I realised that the picture is a great deal more complex than he and his principals seem to think. A number of points struck me.
3. First, the notion that we might "speak quietly to Unionist leaders to persuade them to speak out in condemnation" suggests, perhaps tellingly, a fairly fundamental misunderstanding about the nature of our relationship with the unionists. There is evidence for this misunderstanding elsewhere, of course, as well. But it is alarming.
4. Second, it is my overall impression that the unionists, and in particular the more rigid members of the UUP and many in the DUP, are less instant and forthright in condemning loyalist murders. But the picture is far from simple. I recall doing a little bit of research in advance of an extradition case in San Francisco late last year and finding that several prominent unionists of the more rigid variety had in fact condemned loyalist terrorism in forthright terms: I attach some quotes.

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Although this is only a snapshot and not an authoritative picture of the trend in their condemnations Chris Maccabe agrees that the picture is patchy rather than wholly negative.

5. Third, it is some years since HMG took a decision not to comment on every murder, including those of soldiers and policemen. This was not because of lack of sympathy with the bereaved or failing outrage at the events, but more a lack of vocabulary. The law of diminishing returns had been found to apply. While this cannot be applied as a reason for inadequate unionist condemnation of loyalist terror, it is worth bearing in mind that a constant output of condemnation is far from easy to maintain.

6. Lastly, again on the theme that nobody has a wholly consistent record, it so happens that I found myself mildly irritated this week on reading the Taoiseach's Notre Dame speech where he himself appealed to the republican movement to desist from killing of "Protestant workers, policemen and a cleaner at a police station". Leaving aside the implication from the context (no coercion of Unionists) that all police are unionist and protestant, I suppose the context might be argued to explain the omission of soldiers. I have more than once formed the impression, however, that, in the eyes of the Irish Government, not all killings have equal weight, and the lightest in the scales are those of soldiers. But again I have to confess to the same degree of bias and impressionism that, I suggest, underlies the comments made by Mansergh.

[Signed DJW]

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26 October 1993 - Paisley: "The murders of innocent victims going on in the Province, whether from the loyalist side or the republican side, are equally heinous in the sight of God and must be equally condemned."

17 October 1993 - Molyneaux: to loyalist terrorists in a statement: "I say you are wrong. Wrong in the eyes of the community and in the eyes of God and I say stop it."

17 October 1993 - Maginnis: "The enemy is not exclusively PIRA. It's everyone who resorts to political violence We totally repudiate those who carry out violence in our name."

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Statement by Rt Hon John D Taylor MP for Strangford
October 1993

SLUR ON ULSTER UNIONIST MPs by BBC

Enquiries: 0861-522409

The attempt on BBC Radio Ulster this morning by the BBC Journalist, Mr Noel Thompson, to condemn Ulster Unionist MPs for failing to distance themselves from Loyalist Paramilitary Murders is disgraceful. Since the interview I have had telephone calls from people who were outraged by Mr Thompson's claim. The facts are that Unionist MPs and Officers condemn every murder by Republican or Loyalist Paramilitaries.

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