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258/54/94

**10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA**

From the Private Secretary

26 May 1994

*Dear Jonathan,***PRIME MINISTER'S INFORMAL MEETING WITH THE TAOISEACH  
26 MAY 1994**

Having first held a briefing meeting with your Secretary of State and Quentin Thomas, the Prime Minister had an informal meeting with the Taoiseach for an hour and a half on the afternoon of 26 May. For the first 20 minutes, the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach met alone. They had a general discussion about the situation in Ireland, including James Molyneaux's appeal to the Loyalist paramilitaries to halt violence (which had greatly encouraged the Taoiseach). They also had a word about the Presidency of the European Commission. Martin Mansergh and I then joined the meeting. At the end, the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach gave a short doorstep to the Press in Downing Street.

I have recorded discussion about the joint framework document separately.

**Peace Process**

The Prime Minister noted that, in his interview and press conference earlier in the day, Gerry Adams had not made any substantively new points. Nor had he uttered any condemnation of the latest sectarian killings. The Prime Minister had been pleased to hear from the Taoiseach that Seamus Mallon MP planned to challenge Sinn Fein and the IRA this weekend to declare their position at once. Mallon wanted to put them on the spot before the European elections. The Prime Minister asked how and when the Taoiseach expected Sinn Fein to declare their hand.

The Taoiseach said that, if Sinn Fein were genuinely intending to make a positive response, they should logically do this before the European elections.

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However, they had indicated that their reply would not come until afterwards. He did not expect them to accept the Joint Declaration fully.

Martin Mansergh said that, on past form, Sinn Fein might recognise that the Joint Declaration and the recent British statement represented advances, but go on to declare that there was still a gap to be bridged, and that they had difficulties with certain points. They might couple this with a demand for the right to protect themselves against Loyalist attacks. However, Mansergh did not expect Sinn Fein or the IRA to make a cessation of violence conditional on a cessation by the Loyalists.

The Prime Minister said that we had no information to suggest that the PAC was yet moving towards a cessation of violence. He wondered whether the Provisionals might declare a temporary ceasefire, and request a meeting at either political or official level with the British Government. They might, for example, say that it was necessary to discuss the mechanics of a cessation of violence, what would happen to weapons and so on. We should give some thought to our response.

The Taoiseach agreed that a Sinn Fein position on these lines was possible. If, despite statements already made by Martin McGuinness, the Provisionals demanded a political meeting with the British Government, the Irish would take the line that they did not have the right to negotiate alone with HMG on political matters which concerned a number of other parties. The Prime Minister said this would be helpful.

**Security Cooperation**

The Prime Minister sought the Taoiseach's views on the work of the Chilcot/Dalton Group.

The Taoiseach said that the Group had made progress. He did not think that there was much more for it to do. Mansergh said that discussion now boiled down to two or three items. One was the border flight safety zone. This was politically emotive. Indeed, a similar issue had been largely responsible for the replacement of Lynch as Taoiseach by Haughey.

The Prime Minister said that he was aware of these sensitivities. However, he hoped that the Irish would take a fresh look at our proposal for extraterritorial interviewing in the light of the Dublin pub attack. He suggested that the Chilcot/Dalton Group should be asked to re-examine this. If we managed to detain suspects, the advantages of extraterritorial interviewing



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would be obvious. The Taoiseach agreed to the Prime Minister's proposal.

The Prime Minister raised police structures, and liaison between our respective police forces. It would be very helpful to have Irish arrangements south of the border which corresponded more closely with those to the north. Mansergh replied that there were technical, rather than political, difficulties over this.

I am sending copies of this letter by fax to HM Ambassador at Dublin, and to John Sawers (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and to Melanie Leech (Cabinet Office).

*Yours ever,*

*Roderic*

**RODERIC LYNE**

Jonathan Stephens Esq  
Northern Ireland Office

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31 MAY 1994 Delzenku.

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C. M. Walker  
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FCO PLEASE ADVANCE TO PS/NO 10

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH THE TAOISEACH: 26 MAY

SUMMARY

1. ON NORTHERN IRELAND, TAOISEACH STILL OPTIMISTIC: PUTS PEACE FIRST, TALKS PROCESS VERY MUCH SECOND. OPPORTUNITY TO PRESS HIM TO CONCENTRATE ON KEY TALKS ISSUES, ESPECIALLY CHANGES TO IRISH CONSTITUTION. CHANCE TO PRESS ENHANCED SECURITY COOPERATION AND EU/OECD CANDIDATURES. NO PRE-CORFU BONES OF CONTENTION.

DETAIL

GENERAL

2. FIANNA FAIL CONTINUE TO DOMINATE THE COALITION, TO LABOUR'S CHAGRIN, AND THE OPPOSITION REMAIN IN DISARRAY. THE TAOISEACH'S MAIN DOMESTIC CONCERNS ARE THE ECONOMY (THOUGH UNEMPLOYMENT IS MARGINALLY DOWN AND OTHER INDICATORS ARE GOOD) AND THE 9 JUNE ELECTIONS (EUROPEAN, LOCAL AND TWO BY-ELECTIONS).

NORTHERN IRELAND

3. ACCORDING TO MANSERGH THE TAOISEACH WILL WANT TO CONCENTRATE ON THE 'PEACE PROCESS', WITH THE TALKS PROCESS, SECURITY AND EU MATTERS SOME WAY BEHIND. REYNOLDS' PEACE POLICY CONTINUES TO ENJOY GENERAL PUBLIC SUPPORT HERE, THOUGH THERE ARE SIGNS OF INCREASING PUBLIC FRUSTRATION OVER ITS LACK OF SUCCESS AND THE OPPOSITION AND MEDIA CRITICISE HIS APPARENT WOOING OF THE IRA AND FOOTDRAGGING OVER THE TALKS PROCESS. REYNOLDS' CONCENTRATION ON 'PEACE' REFLECTS HIS SINGLEMINDED OPTIMISM, FED BY INDIRECT CONTACTS WITH THE SINN FEIN LEADERSHIP, AND HIS GUT FEELING THAT TALKS WILL GET NOWHERE UNLESS PEACE IS FIRST ESTABLISHED AND SINN FEIN BROUGHT INTO THE POLITICAL PROCESS (THOUGH HE HAS BEEN FIRM THAT THIS CAN HAPPEN ONLY AFTER A PERMANENT CESSATION OF VIOLENCE). HE BELIEVES THAT THE TWO GOVERNMENTS MUST CONTINUE TO STAND TOGETHER IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN PRESSURE ON SINN FEIN, AND THAT OUR COMMENTS ON SINN FEIN'S QUESTIONS HAVE CLEARED THE LAST BLOCKAGE ON THE TRACK. MOST PEOPLE HERE WOULD AGREE WITH HIM.

4. REYNOLDS CONTINUES TO LEAVE THE TALKS PROCESS LARGELY TO



THE TANAISTE, AND THURSDAY'S MEETING WILL BE A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO BRING HOME TO HIM THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO IT AND TO THE WORK OF THE LIAISON GROUP. HE NEEDS TO BE GIVEN A SIMPLE BUT FIRM MESSAGE THAT UNLESS THE IRISH ARE PREPARED TO CONTEMPLATE 'DEEP' CHANGES TO THEIR CONSTITUTION, INVOLVING NOT JUST THE PRINCIPLE OF REUNIFICATION BY CONSENT BUT ABANDONMENT OF THE CLAIM AS OF RIGHT TO NORTHERN IRELAND, UNIONISTS WILL NOT ACCEPT 'DEEP' MOVES ON NORTH/SOUTH INSTITUTIONS. WE WILL MISS AN OPPORTUNITY TO RESOLVE THE IRISH QUESTION WHICH COMES PERHAPS ONCE A GENERATION. THE PRIME MINISTER MIGHT ALSO STRESS THAT STARTING THE TALKS SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO DRIFT INTO THE AUTUMN: NEITHER OF US CAN AFFORD A VACUUM. THE INCREASE IN LOYALIST TERRORISM AND THE RECENT ATTACK IN DUBLIN SHOULD HELP PERSUADE REYNOLDS OF THIS.

#### SECURITY

5. THE LOYALIST ATTACK IN DUBLIN ON 21 MAY HAS CAUSED FRISONS HERE. SO HAVE PICTURES OF THE PARAMILITARY FUNERAL OF THE VICTIM, WHICH STIR MEMORIES WHICH MOST WANT TO FORGET AND REMIND PEOPLE THAT THE REPUBLIC IS NOT IMMUNE FROM THE DIVISIONS OF NORTHERN IRELAND. REYNOLDS WILL WANT TO BE ABLE TO ASSURE THE IRISH PUBLIC THAT EVERYTHING POSSIBLE IS BEING DONE BY BOTH GOVERNMENTS TO COMBAT THE LOYALIST THREAT. THIS SHOULD GIVE THE PRIME MINISTER A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO REMIND HIM OF THE SECURITY COOPERATION MEASURES OUTLINED IN HIS LETTER OF 11 APRIL.

#### EUROPEAN COUNCIL

6. THE TAOISEACH HAS NO GREAT INTERESTS AT STAKE IN CORFU. HE WILL HOWEVER WANT TO AVOID PRESSURE TO NOMINATE SUTHERLAND AS A COMPROMISE CANDIDATE FOR THE PRESIDENCY, WHICH WOULD ENTAIL THE DISMISSAL OF THE PRESENT IRISH COMMISSIONER, FLYNN, WHO IS A POWERFUL FIGURE IN FIANNA FAIL, AND HIS RETURN TO IRISH POLITICS. THE TAOISEACH WOULD FIND IT VERY DIFFICULT TO HAVE HIM BACK IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES (AND THE LABOUR COALITION PARTNERS EVEN MORE SO). THE PRIME MINISTER WILL WANT TO URGE THE BRITTAN CANDIDATURE, THOUGH THE IRISH DISCOUNT HIS CHANCES AND ARE WAITING TO SEE WHETHER LUBBERS OR DEHAENE GAINS DECISIVE SUPPORT.

#### LORD LAWSON

7. THE MEETING ALSO PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY TO CANVASS SUPPORT FOR LORD LAWSON AS NEXT OECD SECRETARY GENERAL. AGAIN, THE IRISH WILL DO THEIR BEST TO AVOID A DECISION UNTIL THEY ARE SURE HOW THE LAND LIES.

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