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From: Tony Beeton
XDS
5 December 1994

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

- cc: PS/Secretary of State (L&B) - B
- PS/Michael Ancram (L&B) - B
- PS/PUS (L&B) - B
- PS/Mr Fell - B
- Mr Legge - B
- Mr Thomas - B
- Mr Brooke - B
- Mr Leach - B
- Mr Watkins - B
- Mr Williams - B
- Mr Wood (L&B) - B
- Mr Brooker - B
- Mr Maccabe - B
- Mr Stephens - B

L. G. Thomas

UNDER/ SEC 218/12
- 5DEC1994
CENT SEC

TELEPHONE CALL FROM MR MARTIN McGUINNESS, 2 DECEMBER 1994

I received a telephone call from Martin McGuinness at about 5 o'clock on the afternoon of Friday 2 December 1994. He was calling regarding the letter from Quentin Thomas about arrangements for the first meeting of exploratory dialogue.

2. McGuinness's tone throughout was friendly and business-like. He said that Sinn Fein was considering the letter and would be responding to it substantively early the following week. They wished to approach the dialogue constructively and therefore he wanted to let us know as early as possible that the proposed date gave him some difficulties. Could we agree to Friday 9 December instead? I asked whether the time and location were satisfactory, and he confirmed that they were. Sinn Fein had, he said, decided to accept Parliament Buildings as the location for the dialogue. I undertook to get back to him concerning the date as soon as I could. He told me he was about to leave and that I would be dealing with Siobhan (no surname) who "worked for Gerry Adams".

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3. I telephoned Siobhan about an hour later to confirm that Friday 9 December would be suitable for the Government team. I asked her whether we could make our agreement public. She said she would have to consult 'Martin' who was now travelling from Belfast to home. She would do so and telephone me again at 8.00 pm.

4. When she called back (precisely on time) she agreed to the proposal and asked whether I could give her the text of the statement we would make. There ensued a further exchange of calls in which first I suggested a draft which she relayed to Martin McGuinness who accepted it subject to removal of a reference to Parliament Buildings as the location for dialogue. When I queried this she confirmed that Sinn Fein had agreed the location but that they did not want to include it in the statement 'for security reasons'. We then agreed the final form of words which was subsequently issued by Press Office around 9.00 pm on Friday.

5. Having completed that business Siobhan said she wanted to pass on a message from 'Gerry and Martin' about the 'economic conference'. It was quite unacceptable for Sinn Fein to be excluded. Inviting the Councillors from the development committees of Belfast and Derry Councils did not address the real issue which was respect for the party's democratic mandate. 'You control this', she said, 'it really must be sorted out'. I replied that of course I was aware of the issue but it was not a matter with which I was dealing myself, but I undertook to report the views she expressed. She said that the Sinn Fein executive would be meeting in Dublin over the weekend and would be considering the issue further and it would be helpful if someone could phone them there. She gave me two Dublin telephone numbers and I promised to pass these on.

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he?*

SIGNED

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