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25/10/95

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FROM: PETER SMYTH
POLITICAL AFFAIRS DIVISION
16 OCTOBER 1995

HEAD OF THE N.I.
14343
16 OCT 1995
CIVIL SERVICE

cc PS/Sir David Bell
Mr Legge
Mr Maccabe

- B
- B

Mr McAnulty
(for name file)

638/10

in the morning

Mrs Collins - B

CHRIS RYDER: CHAPTER XXXX I

SECTION
CIVIL SEC

25/10
in the morning

On Wednesday evening I took yet another phonecall at home from the indefatigable Chris Ryder. Much of what he had to say was vilification of fellow Authority members, but he did pass on a few comments which may prove to have a longer shelf-life.

2. He now regards David Cook as being on his side in the battle to bring light and openness to the affairs of the Authority. There was some suggestion that a deal had been struck - in return for Ryder's silence now, Cook will support him in a campaign which will force through radical reform of the Authority - possibly "going even further than the NIO would wish". Much phraseology about the clock ticking, fuses lit, countdown to confrontation etc. So certain of victory is Ryder that he is not going to insist on an apology from his Authority colleagues for past misunderstandings, and is not inclined to force the pace on his threat of legal action. (He believes, incidentally, that the Authority has received advice from "the Crown Solicitor" that Ryder has a strong case against them).

3. What underpins his hopes above all, however, is his understanding that Cook will resign with him if their agenda is not followed. He implied that the embarrassment to Government of their jointly resigning on the issue of openness and accountability would be such that the Secretary of State would have little option but to seek a clearout of the Authority "dinosaurs" and "chickens" who have been responsible for provoking the crisis in the first place.

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Whether Ryder is locked in to self-distinction is not clear. He admitted to slight doubts as to whether Cook would, in fact, go all the way on the resignation issue; but felt generally confident that developments over the next few months - particularly publication of the Authority's Report - would bring matters to a head. He is firmly convinced that a decisive clash between the traditional confidentiality of Authority proceedings, and the new regime which he is dedicated to introducing, is now inevitable.

[Signed P Smyth]

PETER SMYTH
SH EXT 27087

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