

cc P.S. SNS
 P.S. Plus
 P.S. R. Derrett
 R. Cork
~~M. Burtin~~
 R. May

From: D E S Blatherwick

Date: 10 November 1993

Mr Archer, RID

cc: Sir T Daunt
 ✓ Mr Q Thomas, NIO

[I had a previous pick
 up the point at X

QST
 15/11]

1. I had lunch today with Martin Mansergh. He launched into the question of a "peace framework".
2. Mansergh said that the Taoiseach was determined to smoke out PIRA on their attitude to a peace formula. He could not allow the possibility that PIRA might turn round at some point in the future and say that the Irish Government, or the Irish and the British governments together, had thrown away the prospect of real peace. And of course, peace, if it could be secured, would be a great gain. The Taoiseach did not dismiss the 3-stranded talks, but in his view they were on a longer time scale. The question of peace was immediate, and the Taoiseach wanted to get it out of the way if possible by the time of the Summit on 3 December.
3. Nally and OhUiginn had gone to London today with a text which sought to include material welcome to unionists (this had been drafted by Mansergh following the Taoiseach's meetings with Archbishop Eames and the Rev John Dunlop: he had shown a text to the former but not to the latter). The Taoiseach hoped that HMG would give their general blessing to the text as a basis for discussion, but without commitment. The Irish would then seek to recruit Hume, pass the text through their usual contacts to PIRA and ask PIRA to give their general approbation too. If they agreed, then the Taoiseach hoped the text could be "polished up" before the Summit. If they prevaricated or failed to meet a pretty tight deadline, then the Irish would press Hume to go public with them in condemning PIRA for turning down the prospect of peace.
4. Mansergh said that the Irish had decided only yesterday on the importance of bringing in Hume; both to help them persuade PIRA and to get him on side for a possible denunciation of PIRA. It was important to split Hume from Adams if a peace formula could not be worked out, and to bring Hume in from the cold.
5. Mansergh said that the Irish were not sure whether PIRA genuinely wanted peace, or whether their manoeuvrings with Hume were politically motivated, to win propaganda points. There was evidence both ways. He also remarked that PIRA (who had the pre-Brussels text) had not yet made comments on any points in the texts the Irish has passed them. They had merely commented that the texts were not acceptable, and referred the Irish to their public statements. X

6. Mansergh said that in his view there were 3 problems for PIRA in the current text. They were still keen on the concept of a time limit. The formula on consent should be more acceptable now to unionists, but less so to PIRA. And they still wanted some wording about HMG joining the ranks of the persuaders.

7. I said that we remain extremely cautious about the whole concept, and that I could not guess the reception Nally and OhUiginn might get in London. The Taoiseach's public statements about the two government working on a peace formula, and about a Summit deadline had made things even more difficult for us. So had the implication that anything produced by the two governments would build on Hume-Adams. Mansergh acknowledged these points.

8. Finally, I said that we were very frustrated that the Irish had yet again failed to provide a paper for the Liaison Group discussions. At the end of the day we would need to press forward with the 3-strande talks, and we genuinely wished to explore the extent of common ground with the Irish, and share views on a possible outcome. Mansergh acknowledged that the Irish Cabinet had not agreed the Irish draft yesterday, and promised to try to speed things up.

Subsequently Mr Reynolds' office rang me 10 with a message for the Prime Minister. He 10 day separately be circulating this, but it was to the effect that the situation in Northern Ireland was very grave; there might be a chance for a mutual ceasefire; the Taoiseach had shown "the text" to some "certain" who approved of it; they wanted to come and see the Minister; urgency was essential.

J. J. J.

D E S Blatherwick.

PS: We subsequently spoke about all this. I suggested that if we could give hedged and general approval to the kind of statement the Irish have in mind in the context of a clear cessation of PIRA violence, we might go along with the Taoiseach's aim of smoking out PIRA, with the expectation of a negative answer from them.

(SIGNED)

* Mr Thomas and I.

JONATHAN STEPHENS
PRIVATE SECRETARY