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- 4 NOV 1993
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ps/s of s (Mr Stephens)
1. cc Mr Thomas
Mr Cooke
Mr Beeton
Mr May
Mr Denerell
Mr Richard

From the Secretary of the Cabinet and Head of the Home Civil Service
Sir Robin Butler GCB CVO

Ref: A093/3305

2 November 1993

2. PUS to see

Dear John

Northern Ireland Call by the US Ambassador

Ray Seitz came in to see me again at his request this morning. Following the briefing which I had given him a couple of weeks ago, he wanted to update himself in the light of subsequent developments in Northern Ireland and the Prime Minister's meeting with the Taoiseach.

I said that, in the light of the Shankhill Road bombing and other atrocities, the disruption which I had feared in the relations between the British and Irish Governments had not occurred. Those incidents had made it clear that it was not only impracticable to go forward on the basis of the Hume/Adams discussions but also that any gesture which was regarded by Unionists as conciliatory to the Provisionals would exacerbate the situation. We had been very pleased by the forward-moving speeches of the Taoiseach and the Tanaiste in the Dail last week and I understood that the Prime Minister's tete-a-tete meeting with the Taoiseach had been very cordial. The Prime Minister was now planning to hold separate talks with the leaders of the constitutional parties in Northern Ireland in an effort to get talks going again: If this happened, the British would be ready to table the proposals for the future Government of Northern Ireland which we had prepared against the possibility of renewed talks some time ago. There would be a further inter-Governmental conference with the Irish Government tomorrow and one of the regular six monthly summits with the Taoiseach in December.

Ray Seitz took note. He said that the President had made a short statement designed to be helpful and not to exacerbate the situation. It was welcome that the British and Irish Governments were keeping together.

I am copying this letter to David Gillmore, for transmission, if he thinks fit, also to Robin Renwick.

J A Chilcot Esq CB
Northern Ireland Office

Your own,

Robin

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