

F J.D.

Ref. A093/1906

MR LYNE

Meeting with the Taoiseach: 6 June 1993

Following the Taoiseach's telephone call to the Prime Minister on Saturday 5 June, I went to Dublin this evening and met the Taoiseach at Baldonnell air base. The Taoiseach had broken his holiday in the west of Ireland - it was a holiday weekend in Ireland - and had returned by helicopter.

2. It turned out that the Taoiseach's purpose was to hand over the latest version of the joint declaration between the two Governments (copy attached), of which we have seen previous versions. The significance of the present version was that the Taoiseach had received confirmation - last Thursday, as it emerged during our conversation - that this draft had been accepted by the Provisional Army Council as a basis for a lasting cessation of violence. The urgency with which the Taoiseach had asked for a meeting with the Prime Minister was motivated by a desire to get some reaction from the Prime Minister at their bilateral next week. I asked whether there was any other deadline as far as the Irish Government or any other parties were concerned, and the Taoiseach confirmed that there was not.

3. Although our talk lasted for more than an hour (there was no one else present), what the Taoiseach said is mainly covered by the commentary on the draft (also attached). (He handed over the documents only at the end of the meeting in a sealed envelope and so we did not discuss the substance). The Taoiseach

emphasised that, in his view, the breakthrough was Sinn Fein's acceptance of joint and separate self determination: he argued that Sinn Fein had never previously accepted the doctrine of consent - hence the armed struggle. He also referred to Mr McGimpsey's endorsement of joint and several self determination, although in answer to my question he said that he had had no contact with representatives of the Unionists.

*not in the*

4. Other points of interest which emerged from the discussion were:

i. The Taoiseach showed no awareness of any other messages that we had received from the PAC and I did not refer to them.

ii. discussions of the Taoiseach's document with Sinn Fein and the Provisionals had been "at two removes". There was no question of any direct contact between the Irish Government and Sinn Fein or the Provisionals, and there would not be until they had indicated a permanent end to violence.

*no direct  
contact*

iii. despite the reference to John Hume's having agreed the wording, Mr Hume had not been involved in discussions of the draft with Sinn Fein. The Taoiseach implied that Sinn Fein had not been pleased by the publicity given to the meeting between Hume and Adams.

iv. there had been several exchanges of drafts with Sinn Fein. Even following the indication last week that the PAC had accepted the document, they had subsequently sought further glosses, which the Taoiseach had rejected.

*with js  
deliberately*

ROBIN BUTLER

8 June 1991

- v. Mr Spring was aware of the exercise, but, by his own wish, had not been involved in the substance. He might, however, mention it to the Foreign Secretary when he saw him on Tuesday. I said that I would ensure that the Foreign Secretary was similarly aware that the Taoiseach had handed over the document, although I did not expect him by then to be ready to discuss its substance.
- vi. the official on whom the Taoiseach was relying for advice was still Dermot Nally, who had agreed to continue to advise on this exercise following his retirement. If we wished to discuss the matter at official level in the period leading up to the bilateral between the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach, Mr Nally should be our contact.
- vii. the Taoiseach suggested that, if the Prime Minister was ready to give him some first reactions to the document at their bilateral, this should be done at a restricted meeting between them.
5. On handling, I will ask the Northern Ireland Office to prepare a commentary on the documents, which Ministers can discuss before the bilateral with the Irish. My impression is that the text is in some respects obscure and is still some way from being what we could accept or have any prospect of selling to the Unionists.
6. I am copying this minute and the attachments to the Private Secretaries to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, and to Sir David Gillmore and Mr Chilcot.

FERB

ROBIN BUTLER

6 June 1993

SECRET