



Roderic Lyne Esq CMG  
Private Secretary to the  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street

30 November 1993

Dear Roderic

**CONVERSATION WITH THE TANAISTE'S OFFICE**

At your suggestion, the Secretary of State sought to speak to Mr Spring tonight. In the event it was not possible to arrange but I explained to Niall Burgess, the Tanaiste's Private Secretary, what the Secretary of State had in mind to say.

I said that we had received, through the Ambassador, a message which caused some concern, although perhaps we had misunderstood it. For our part, we remained committed to our twin objectives: peace and an overall political settlement. If anything, the events of the last few days should have convinced every observer that the British Government were committed to securing a genuine end to violence, and prepared to take risks to do so. We recognised that the two Governments had a duty to give a lead to this and we consequently thought it much better that there should be a summit than none at all. Our assessment was that, on the basis of the two texts which were on the table, there remained a good prospect of reaching an agreed outcome. But even if not, it was desirable for the two heads of Government to meet to discuss their differences: otherwise, the ground was ceded to the political



extremists. We therefore hoped that officials could meet quickly, with both texts on the table, to see if they could make progress towards an agreed outcome.

Mr Burgess said that there was a strong feeling in Dublin that it would be very bad if the summit went ahead and the two heads of Government were then unable to demonstrate that they had made progress: it would be important that there was a good prospect of something of substance emerging. Until recently, the Irish had thought that the two Governments were working together on the same sort of language, but it had become clear that there was far less agreement than they had thought.

I said that it was important that we had received and understood the right message. As we understood it, the message was that there was no point in having a summit unless we were prepared to accept the Irish text or something like it. If that was the correct message, that put us in an extraordinarily difficult situation. We could not possibly accept such an ultimatum, not least because if it became known to unionists it would colour their reaction to whatever emerged from a summit. We were not insisting that we would only negotiate on our text: if both texts could be on the table, then we saw a good prospect of reaching an agreed outcome. The events of the last few days had been far from of our own choosing, but they had created a new situation and not all positions were set in concrete.



SECRET AND PERSONAL

Mr Burgess said that my description of the message as we had received it was rather harder than had been intended. He took the points which I made and agreed to pass them to the Tanaiste, with a view to a possible phone conversation with the Secretary of State tomorrow morning. While I was on the phone, he checked with the Taoiseach's office and said that they were not now expecting to put a call through to the Prime Minister tonight.

Copies of this letter to go David Blatherwick, John Sawers and Melanie Leach.

Signed

JONATHAN STEPHENS

SECRET AND PERSONAL



CONFIDENTIAL

FROM: S J LEACH  
Security Policy and Operations Division  
10 November 1993

RECEIVED  
1-DEC 1993  
POLICE OFFICE

- Hcc: PS/SofS (B)
- PS/Michael Ancram (L&B)
- PS/PUS (L&B)
- PS/Mr Fell
- Mr Thomas
- Mr Deverell
- Mr Cooke
- Mr Maccabe
- Mr Rickard
- Mr Beeton
- Mr May
- HMA Dublin

- Mr Lacey
- Mr Stovell
- Mr Bell
- Mr Williams
- Mr Cooke
- Mr Hattland

DRAFT AND CONTRIBUTION TO SUMMARY COMMUNIQUE

You had any suggestions for a draft passage on security co-operation Summary Communique. Would the following be of any use?

"The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach condemned the latest terrorist attacks in Northern Ireland and reaffirmed their determination to persevere and further develop security co-operation in order to help bring a permanent end to terrorism. They welcomed recent arms and explosives finds in Britain, the Republic and Northern Ireland. The two leaders also reviewed some specific issues and identified a number of areas where further work should be undertaken to examine the potential for enhanced co-operation."

[signed  
S.J.]

S J LEACH  
Ext 27024

CONFIDENTIAL

SC/501/1350