

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE
13 JAN 1994
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SIL DIVISION

FROM: PS/PUS
13 JANUARY 1994

Mr Shannon reported that 440 prisoners had been granted Christmas leave. Only 11 had failed to return on time, none of whom were terrorists. The one significant incident that had occurred over the Christmas period was the hijacking of a bus on the M6 at the Maze on New Year's Eve. The hijacking was not regarded as political.

Reactions to the Joint Declaration

PIRA prisoners had appeared to display a remarkable degree of interest in political issues. They resented being used as a bargaining chip, and felt that any benefits that might be likely to accrue should not be discussed at this stage. They had discussed the two issues which caused them the most difficulty were "surrender", which they could not stomach, and the question of the Unionist veto, which remained unresolved. PUS was commissioning research on what had happened to IRA prisoners following the border campaign 1954-62.

Policing structures

Mr Lyon reported that dialogue was continuing at a quite friendly level. NIO were producing a paper for a meeting with the Authority which had been planned for the following week, but as neither side was ready it would be postponed. The Authority's main worry was over RUC appointments.

- cc. PS/Mr Fell - B
- Mr Legge - B
- Mr Thomas - B
- Mr Deverell - B
- Mr Blackwell - B
- Mr Lyon - B
- Mr Shannon - B
- Mr Steele - B
- Mr Bell - B
- Mr Watkins - B
- Mr Williams - B
- Mr Wood (B) - B
- Mr Daniell - B
- Mr Leach - B
- Mr Maccabe - B
- Mr Marsh - B
- Mr Robinson - B
- Mr Archer, RID, FCO - B
- Mr Quinn - B
- Mr Beeton - B

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

PUS STOCKTAKING ST(1)94: 6 JANUARY 1994

Mr Lyon had met the RUC, Colia Smith, that morning.

PUS chaired a meeting on 6 January 1994, the main purpose of which was to take stock of events following the Joint Declaration. Mr Fell, Mr Legge, Mr Bell, Mr Blackwell, Mr Deverell, Mr Lyon, Mr Shannon, Mr Steele, Mr Watkins, Mr Wood, Mr Robinson, Mr Leach, Mr Quinn, Mr Marsh, Mr Daniell, Mr Maccabe, Mr Beeton and Mr Archer were present.

Crisis in the community
Security

The NIO paper had been shown to the Lord Chief Justice, who

Mr Legge reported recent comments from the GOC that attacks against the security forces were comparable to anything the previous year. He would be welcome a meeting of SPM(O) to look at contingency measures [now arranged for Monday 17 January]. PIRA appeared to have no intention of giving up: they had killed a soldier and were using fire bombs as a demonstration of power. Mr Deverell added that if some planned attacks had not been thwarted, there could have been 10 security forces deaths in recent days. They were not, however, using large vehicle bombs as they did not want to provoke another Greysteel. PIRA's main preoccupation was to avoid a split. They would only accept the Joint Declaration if it did not cause a split, and all the signs were that it would cause a split.

Prisons: general

3. Mr Shannon reported that 440 prisoners had been let out on Christmas home leave. Only 11 had failed to return on time, none of whom were terrorists. The one significant incident that had occurred over the Christmas period was the refusal of the UFF to lock up at the Maze on New Year's Eve. This had not been regarded as political.

Reactions to the Joint Declaration

4. PIRA prisoners had appeared fairly cheerful, and had displayed a remarkable degree of naivety on political issues. They resented being used as a bargaining counter, and felt that any benefits that might be likely to come to them should not be discussed at this stage. They had said that the two issues which caused them the most difficulty were the word "surrender", which they could not stomach, and the question of the Unionist veto, which remained unresolved. PUS said that he would be commissioning research on what had happened to IRA prisoners following the border campaign 1956-62.

Policing structures

5. Mr Lyon reported that dialogue was continuing at a quite friendly level. NIO were producing a paper for a meeting with the Police Authority which had been planned for the following week, but as neither side was ready it would be postponed. The Authority's main worry was over RUC appointments.

HMI Report on the RUC

6. Mr Lyon had met the HMI, Colin Smith, that morning. Mr Smith would not readily make changes in his Report which had been suggested by the Chief Constable. He had produced a 10-12 point conclusion, which Mr Lyon felt ought to be shown to the Chief Constable before publication. This might slow down the timescale.

Crime in the community

7. The NIO paper had been shown to the Lord Chief Justice, who was content.

Political development

8. Mr Maccabe reported that the reaction of the political parties and the public to the overall situation was one of waiting to see what would happen. The Ancram Round was pressing ahead. The UUP had been signed up for the following week, and a meeting with the SDLP was likely to be held on 20 January. A response was expected from the DUP. The UUP had shown a fair degree of nervousness, with Jim Molyneaux having done a great deal of work on steadying nerves. They did not want to face a large split with the DUP. Nationalists were looking at John Hume, but were not quite sure what he was up to: that included MPs, who would not rock the boat and risk destabilising the leadership.

Information Service

9. Mr Wood reported on the helpful recent media efforts by the Prime Minister and "irregulars" such as Michael Mates, and to a lesser extent, Peter Bottomley. The line on amnesties and arms had so far been holding.

Anglo/Irish

10. Mr Archer reported that potential difficulties with the Irish included extradition; a US visa for Gerry Adams, on which he suggested that HMA Dublin should be actively setting out the Washington line; the US peace envoy; and Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act. Mr Fell mentioned the need for the two Governments to be shoulder to shoulder on every conceivable issue.

Mr Wood
Mr Mates
Mr Bottomley
Mr Wood
Mr Archer, RED

PS/SECRETARY OF STATE (L&B) - 5

JOINT DECLARATION STOCKTAKES

Signed:

As requested in your note of 5 January, I attach an annotated agenda for the Secretary of State's meeting next week.

D T McILROY
PRIVATE SECRETARY
13 JANUARY 1994

number of contingencies in terms of the Provisionals' Joint Declaration and includes items for discussion under each.

To be considered alongside the items on the agenda will be key events in the coming weeks, in particular:-

- TOPS for questions - 20 January;
- James Cochrane's Private Members motion on political development in Northern Ireland - 21 January;
- The Intergovernmental Conference - 23 January