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From the Private Secretary

18 November 1993

- Michael Antram
- P.S. P42
- P.S. R. Fell
- D. Wall
- R. Cook
- M. R. Keel
- R. ...
- R. Burtin
- R. ...
- R. (Chy. - Jms)

Dear Jonathan

CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER BY ARCHBISHOP EAMES

Archbishop Eames had a 35-minute meeting with the Prime Minister on the evening of 18 November, followed by a further 20 minutes with your Secretary of State and John Chilcot.

Eames said that the high priority being given to Northern Ireland by the Prime Minister was offering hope to people in Northern Ireland. It also carried the risk of raised expectations.

Eames had had a long meeting earlier in the day with James Molyneux. They had discussed the revised version of JD13, which I enclose. Eames had agreed the changes which are underlined in paragraphs 5 and 7 in his meeting earlier this week with the Taoiseach.

Molyneux had not been happy with the new wording at the beginning of paragraph 7. He had suggested instead that the paragraph should begin: "while recognising the affirmation by both governments in the Anglo/Irish Agreement that any change in the status of Northern Ireland would only come about with the consent of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland, the Taoiseach also recognised ..." The Prime Minister agreed that this would be an improvement.

As you know, Eames had asked the Taoiseach to include a specific reference to the Irish Government's willingness to remove Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution. Somewhat surprisingly, Molyneux had not insisted on specific reference to Articles 2 and 3. He had been content with the general reference in paragraph 7 of "the presence in the Constitution of the Republic of elements which are deeply resented by Northern Unionists". Molyneux would ideally have preferred a commitment to change Articles 2 and 3, but did not balk at the present text.

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Although Reynolds told Eames that he could not accept a commitment to "remove" Articles 2 and 3, Mansergh had said on the telephone on 18 November that the Taoiseach was now wavering over this.

Molyneaux's main objection had been to the final three paragraphs (9 to 11). These were not acceptable to him. He had told Eames that he would, overnight, try his hand at an alternative draft. He and Eames would discuss this on 19 November. Eames might then try Molyneaux's version on Dublin. If he could obtain satisfaction on this passage, Molyneaux was prepared to give the whole text a hearing. Molyneaux had commented that there had been an "unplayable change" from the previous document he had seen, which had been so green that he could not touch it.

→ "unbelievable change" - SEE Doc 35.

Paragraph 10 refers to the Irish Convention. Mansergh had also said that the Taoiseach was no longer treating this as a "final" text, but had reverted to describing it as a draft.

Eames said, in deep confidence, that Reynolds had given him a letter for Molyneaux. He believed that the letter made three main points. It had emphasised that Reynolds saw Molyneaux's role as crucial. It had acknowledged the need to allay the fears of the Unionists. And it had conveyed a suggestion that Molyneaux and the Taoiseach should meet. Eames and the Prime Minister agreed that, for the time being at least, it might be for the best if Molyneaux and Reynolds did not meet. Eames had so advised Molyneaux. It was important not to compromise Molyneaux's position at the centre of Unionist opinion. Molyneaux and Reynolds had very different personalities, and the chemistry between them might not work.

Eames had expressed some concerns about the Taoiseach's approach. Reynolds had a sense of mission, and felt that he was going further than any previous Taoiseachs. He also deluded himself that he knew the northerners well. This was based on business dealings 20 years ago.

Eames and the Prime Minister agreed that Molyneaux's advice and the protection of his position were important, and that he should not be pushed into an exposed stance. Eames was concerned that Paisley would play on the emotions of families who had lost relatives in the conflict. However, he felt that there was some disillusionment with Paisley. He told the story of a Loyalist prisoner in the Maze who had said bitterly that Paisley would not have got out alive had he visited the prison: he had "taken us to the top of the hill and left us".

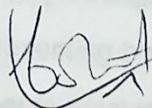
Eames accepted the thesis that Loyalist violence would tail off if IRA activity ended. But this would not happen immediately, as the Loyalists would have to show that they were not reacting to the IRA.

The Prime Minister said that we would not be prepared to offer an amnesty. Eames agreed with this, and said that any criminal investigations which were under way should not be stopped, if there was a cessation of violence.

After the Prime Minister had gone, your Secretary of State gave the Archbishop the draft British text for a joint statement (sent under cover of your letter of 18 November) to read. Eames did not comment in detail.

Finally, there was a little more conversation about the Taoiseach. Eames said that he had expressed to Reynolds his concerns that expectations of the Summit were being raised too high. The Taoiseach was very determined to do something, even if he had to act without British agreement. If his initiative did not succeed, he could nevertheless leave office and go back to business as someone who had tried harder than any predecessor.

Yours sincerely



Roderic Lyne

RODERIC LYNE

Jonathan Stephens, Esq.,
Northern Ireland Office

1. The Taoiseach and the British Prime Minister acknowledge that the most urgent and important issue facing the people of Ireland, North and South, and the British and Irish Governments together, is to remove the causes of conflict, to overcome the legacy of history and to heal the divisions which have resulted, recognising that the absence of a lasting and satisfactory settlement of relationships between the peoples of both islands has contributed to continuing tragedy and suffering. They believe that the development of an agreed framework for peace, which has been discussed between them since early last year, and which is based on a number of key principles articulated by the two Governments over the past 20 years, together with the adaptation of other widely accepted principles, provides the starting point of a peace process designed to culminate in a political settlement.
2. The Taoiseach and the British Prime Minister are convinced of the inestimable value to both their peoples of healing divisions in Ireland and of ending a conflict which has been so manifestly to the detriment of all. Both recognise that the ending of divisions can come about only through the agreement and cooperation of the people, North and South, representing both traditions in Ireland. They therefore make a solemn commitment to promote cooperation at all levels on the basis of the fundamental principles, undertakings, obligations under international agreements, to which they have jointly committed themselves, and the guarantees which each Government has given. It is their aim to foster agreement and reconciliation, leading to a new political framework founded on consent and encompassing the whole island and its relations with the neighbouring island.

3. They also consider that the development of the European Community will, of itself, require new approaches to serve interests common to both parts of Ireland.
4. The Prime Minister reiterates on behalf of the British Government that they have no selfish strategic or economic interest in Northern Ireland. Their primary interest is to see peace, stability and reconciliation established by agreement among all the people who inhabit the island, and they will work together with the Irish Government to achieve such an agreement, which will embrace the totality of relationships. The role of the British Government will be to encourage, assist and enable such agreement over a period through a process of dialogue and cooperation based on full respect for the rights and identities of both traditions in Ireland. They accept that such agreement may, as of right, take the form of agreed independent structures for the island as a whole. The British Government agree that it is for the people of the island of Ireland alone to exercise their right of self-determination on the basis of consent, freely and concurrently given, North and South, to bring about a united Ireland, if that is their wish. They reaffirm as a binding obligation that they will, for their part, introduce the necessary legislation to give effect to this, or to any measure of agreement on future relationships in Ireland which the people living in Ireland may themselves freely and collectively determine without external impediment and on a basis of concurrent North-South consent. They believe that the people of Britain would wish, in friendship to all sides, to enable the people of Ireland to reach agreement on how they may live together in harmony and in partnership, with respect for their diverse traditions and with full recognition of the special links and the unique relationship which exist between the peoples of Britain and Ireland.

The Taoiseach, on behalf of the Irish Government, considers that the lessons of Irish history, and especially of Northern Ireland, show that stability and well-being will not be found under any political system which is refused allegiance or rejected on grounds of identity by a significant minority of those governed by it. He accepts, on behalf of the Irish Government, that the democratic right of self-determination by the people of Ireland as a whole must be achieved and exercised with the agreement and consent of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland and must, consistent with justice and equity, respect the democratic dignity and the civil rights and religious liberties of both communities. These would be reflected in any future political and constitutional arrangements emerging from a new and more broadly based agreement.

6. The Taoiseach however recognizes the genuine difficulties and barriers to building relationships of trust either within or beyond Northern Ireland, from which both traditions suffer. He will work to create a new era of trust, in which suspicions of the motives or actions of others is removed on the part of either community. He considers that the future of the island depends on the nature of the relationship between the two main traditions that inhabit it. Every effort must be made to build a new sense of trust between those communities. In recognition of the fears of the Unionist community and as a token of his willingness to make a personal contribution to the building up of that necessary trust, the Taoiseach will examine with his colleagues any elements in the democratic life and organisation of the Irish State that can be represented to the Irish Government in the course of political dialogue as a real and substantial threat to their way of life and ethos, or that can be represented as not being fully consistent with a modern democratic and pluralist society, and undertakes to examine any possible ways of removing such obstacles. Such an examination would of course have due regard to the desire to preserve those inherited values

that are largely shared throughout the island or that belong to the cultural and historical roots of the people of this island in all their diversity. The Taoiseach hopes that over time a meeting of hearts and minds will develop, which will bring all the people of Ireland together, and will work towards that objective, but he pledges in the meantime that as a result of the efforts that will be made to build mutual confidence no Northern Unionist should ever have to fear in future that this ideal will be pursued either by threat or coercion.

security and welfare of the people of this island will depend on an open, frank

7. Despite the affirmation by both Governments in the Anglo-Irish Agreement that any change in the status of Northern Ireland would only come about with the consent of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland, the Taoiseach

recognizes the continuing uncertainties and misgivings which dominate so much of Northern Unionist attitudes towards the rest of Ireland. He believes that we stand at a stage of our history when the genuine feelings of all traditions in the North must be recognized and acknowledged. He appeals to both traditions at this time to grasp the opportunity for a fresh start and a new beginning, which could hold such promise for all our lives and the generations to come. He asks the people of Northern Ireland to look on the people of the Republic as friends, who share their grief and shame over all the suffering of the last quarter of a century, and who want to develop the best possible relationship with them, a relationship in which trust and new understanding can flourish and grow. The

Taoiseach also acknowledges the presence in the Constitution of the Republic of elements which are deeply resented by Northern Unionists, but which at the same time reflect hopes and ideals which lie deep in the hearts of many Irish men and women North and South. But as we move towards a new era of understanding in which new relationships of trust may grow and bring peace to the island of Ireland, the Taoiseach believes that the time has come to consider together how best the hopes and identities of all can be expressed in more

balanced ways, which no longer engender division and the lack of trust to which he has referred.

8. The Taoiseach recognizes the need to engage in dialogue, which would address with honesty and integrity the fears of all traditions. But that dialogue, both within the North and between the people and their representatives of both parts of Ireland, must be entered into with an acknowledgement that the future security and welfare of the people of this island will depend on an open, frank and balanced approach to all the problems which for too long have caused division.
9. The British and Irish Governments will seek to create institutions and structures, which, while respecting the diversity of the people of Ireland, would enable them to work together in all areas of common interest. This will help over a period to build the trust necessary to end past divisions, leading to an agreed and peaceful future. Such structures would, of course, include institutional recognition of the special links that exist between the peoples of Britain and Ireland as part of the totality of relationships, while taking account of newly forged links with the rest of Europe.
10. In the light of their joint commitment to promote the foregoing objectives, the Taoiseach has indicated to the British Prime Minister his intention of establishing an Irish Convention to consult and advise, as long as is necessary, on the steps required to remove the barriers of distrust which at present divide the people of Ireland and which also stand in the way of the exercise in common by them of self-determination on a basis of equality. It will be open to the Convention to make recommendations on ways in which agreement, in the spirit of the Report of the New Ireland Forum, and respect for the rights and identities of both

traditions in Ireland, can be promoted and established. The Convention will operate with full respect for the authority of the institutions established by law in the State. It will be a fundamental guiding principle of the Convention that all differences between the Irish people relating to the exercise in common of the right to self-determination will be resolved exclusively by peaceful, political means.

- 11. The Convention will be open to democratically mandated political parties in Ireland which abide exclusively by the democratic process and wish to share in dialogue about Ireland's political future and the welfare of all its people. The Irish Government will approach the Convention in a true spirit of openness and magnanimity.

We first discussed the document's call to the Prime Minister by Archbishop Eames. I did not reveal that we already had the text of Eames' latest amendment to ID13. Mansergh conspicuously did not say that Eames was "very happy" with the text, or allude to that effect. He had a more cautious tone. There were bits of the text which the Archbishop would wish to discuss with the Prime Minister. Thereafter the Archbishop had a good to poster his disapproval of Mansergh implied that the Archbishop wanted to speak to Mansergh after his meeting with the Prime Minister. In "broad terms" the Archbishop was being very helpful.

I said that while there were many factors to play, the most important judgement we would have to make was whether a joint declaration was likely to be a strong way forward.

Mansergh again replied cautiously. While we were moving in a particular direction, the text could not be presented as an ultimatum to PIRA. One would "have to allow space for reasoned amendments". He expected that this would mainly be concentrated in paragraph 4. The Irish Government was very confident that PIRA wanted "to avoid a situation of peace breaking out". The vibes so far were that the proposals sounded to other balance to the Unionists were "not unacceptable".

Mansergh then gave the impression the negotiations with PIRA on the text was already taking place, although he was not explicit.