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10 DOWNING STREET
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From the Private Secretary

18 November 1993

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 Molyneaux. 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.

Molyneaux 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, Molyneaux 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". Molyneaux would ideally have preferred a commitment to change Articles 2 and 3, but did not balk at the present text.

Michael Anson

P.S. P.W.
P.S. R. Fell

D. Donald

R. Cooke

M. Ricketts

R. Thomas

R. Beston

R. May

R. Glyn-Jones

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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*

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".

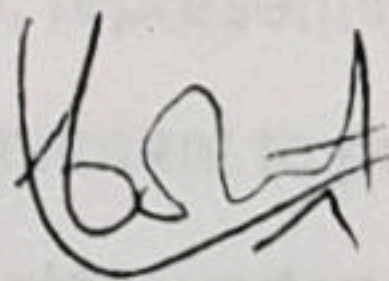
Eames accepted the thesis that Loyalist violence would tail off if IRA activity ended. But this would not happen immediately, as the Loyalists would have to show that they were not reacting to the IRA.

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

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