

CONFIDENTIAL

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PRIME MINISTER

YOUR TALK WITH MR HAUGHEY

You are due to speak to Mr Haughey at 10 o'clock this morning. I attach a brief from the Northern Ireland Office.

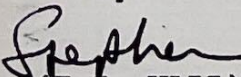
We have no direct evidence to suggest that Mr Haughey will ask you to build on the PIRA Christmas ceasefire but, if he does, I think you should be pretty negative.

Last year Peter Brooke took the ceasefire more seriously than did Northern Ireland politicians. They turned out to be right. It represented no more than a Christmas break for the Provisionals. This year the three day ceasefire has been reported factually by the media with nothing that I have heard or seen suggesting that anyone regards it as other than temporary and mainly designed for the convenience of the Provisionals themselves. Moreover, the daily disruption of life in London due to firebombs has made everyone pretty cynical.

Mr Haughey may also want to talk about the possible statement which he discussed with you in Dublin. Sir Robin Butler and Mr Nally have had a preliminary meeting at which Mr Nally showed Sir Robin Butler a draft, presumably prepared by John Hume. Sir Robin was not allowed to keep a draft but it did not look too bad. It contained our commitment to the principle of self-determination for the people of Northern Ireland.

I am sending you separately in the box a minute from Sir Robin Butler on the next steps. All you need say to Mr Haughey is that you have had a preliminary read-out on his discussion with Mr Nally and that you are prepared to see them pursue the matter in the New Year.

The Irish want to expand the group slightly to include two more people on their side and ~~to~~ more on ours. Should Mr Haughey mention that, you may want to say that you would like to reflect on it. [Mr Brooke has reservations about expanding the group, as do I].


(J.S. WALL)

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