

SECRET

Flash to Mr Stephens N10

(13)



Your draft letter to Reynolds
will need to be recast to
respond to this.

11 November, 1993.

Oifig an Taoisigh
Office of the Taoiseach

cc Sir Robin Butler

John Savers Fco

+ to me (x2)

Mr. John Major, M.P.,
Prime Minister.

Rhona Lyne.

11/xi

- Coherence
Detrago

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Dear John,

I was very disappointed to hear from my officials that, despite our encouraging and constructive discussion in Brussels, you find yourself unable to proceed any further with our proposed initiative. I find it all the more difficult to understand, as I have gone to great lengths for some time to protect your freedom of manoeuvre, at the cost of some domestic political criticism, not least because of the Brussels communiqué, and the upsurge in support for peace in the days following. I also believe I went to great lengths to accommodate in what is now a very balanced text all essential concerns of both Governments as well as appealing to both communities. I understand that you have not yet spoken to Archbishop Eames, who has made a very helpful contribution to the text.

You will understand that it is a politically untenable position for an Irish Government to ignore what is widely felt to be the best opportunity, for many years, to bring about lasting peace, and for the two Governments and more especially the Irish Government to have refused even to explore the possibility. This would cast a shadow over the talks process, and could give a disastrous new boost to Sinn Fein/the IRA. It was my intention, if you had been able to support the revised draft, to seek confirmation that it would provide a basis for peace. That way we could have had a firm conclusion in the next two or three weeks before our December meeting as to whether peace could be delivered, a matter of vital concern to my Government, and to all the people of this country.

I will have to explore for my own part what other means are open to me of pursuing an initiative for peace, which so far as I am concerned has absolute priority. It is almost inevitable, as I have explained to you on a number of occasions, that the approach, which we have put to you, will in one form or another sooner or later become a matter of intensive public debate.

Yours sincerely,

Taoiseach.