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FROM: PETER MAY
POLITICAL AFFAIRS DIVISION
5 NOVEMBER 1993

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

- cc PS/Secretary of State (B&L) - B
- PS/Sir John Wheeler (B&L) - B
- PS/Michael Ancram (B&L) - B
- PS/PUS (B&L) - B
- PS/Mr Fell - B
- Mr Thomas - B
- Mr Legge - B
- Mr Williams - B
- Mr Watkins - B
- Mr Bell - B
- Mr Maccabe - B
- Mr Cooke - B
- Mr Brooker** - B
- Mr Kyle - B
- HMA Dublin - B
- Mr Archer, RID - B

Handwritten initials and signature:
C.H.
M.B. Rogers

VIEW FROM THE MAIDEN CITY

During a visit to Derry yesterday, I called separately on Bishop Daly (RC), Berna McIvor (Chair of WELB and prominent SDLP activist), Dean Orr (CofI), Rev Kenneth Best (Methodist) and Jim Guy (Deputy Mayor of Derry City Council and Independent Unionist). The following offers a synopsis of the main points:

Hume/Adams

2. There appeared to have been a significant shift in mood in the area since the Greysteel massacre. After a lengthy period of relative calm in the City and its environs, the killings had come as a great shock. Opinion had been mobilised in favour of 'peace'. All those I spoke to supported Hume's efforts in his meetings with Adams. Although I only met liberal Unionists, there was a sense

from them that the Unionist politicians were not representing their views by criticising Hume so savagely. Hume's standing in the area is, of course, without question. That has reinforced support for him, as has the fear that rejection of his initiative left no alternative but further killing. No-one I spoke to had any faith in inter-party talks as a method of ending violence. M

3. Bishop Daly spoke particularly strongly on this. He believed the time had come to try and end violence first and then start talking. The opposite path had been tried for 20 years and failed. Daly feared both for Hume's health and his political future, following his rejection. He, and others, sought reassurance that the Governments had not shut the door on 'peace'. I explained the Hume/Adams process had been rejected because it would not actually bring peace. The two Governments were committed to seeking a peace process which would bring an end to violence on both sides. Political talks formed a part of any such process.

4. Both Daly and Mrs McIvor commented that public support for Hume was enormous. People approached them in the streets to commend his efforts. In Greysteel many in both communities supported his efforts. Hume was convinced Adams could deliver. There was a chance now which should be seized.

5. Liberal Unionist opinion was less overwhelming, but the prize was seen as so important that there was no dissent regarding Hume's actions. The process, involving Adams, was not popular. There was unanimity that any outcome should not be seen to have Adams' fingerprints on it, nor could it change the status of Northern Ireland, if Unionist approval were to be gained. Sinn Fein could then be brought in from the cold after a cessation of violence. Dean Orr suggested a few months would be sufficient, the Rev Best a year, as a quarantine period. Best suggested there was now a greater willingness within the community to address the issue of talks with SF. The result of Greysteel was a greater unity of purpose within the community against violence and in favour of peace. Spring's six principles were widely seen as helpful.

Internment

6. Mrs McIvor registered very strong concern over the possible re-introduction of internment, and laid down a marker that civil disobedience and disorder would almost certainly follow no matter how accurate the identification of players in terrorism. Both she and Bishop Daly drew attention to the rioting in Derry following Greysteel. This was a generation who had not known rioting before. It was important to give them no opportunity to get a taste for it. The riots themselves had been small-scale and largely alcohol-induced.

(Signed)

Communal harmony

PETER MAY

7. There was great play made by all those I met of the level of communal harmony, the economic and political progress that had been made and the lack of terrorist activity in the area (Greysteel excepted). This is not new, but was more forcibly expressed than usual. That provided a cake upon which all believed peace could provide the icing. Through organisations such as the Council, the Churches Trust and the Two Cathedrals festival, people had become used to mixing together. The peace rally outside the Guildhall had been well attended, and people were desperately clutching at any straws that might bring peace.

8. There was also much gratitude for the interest the Secretary of State and Lady Mayhew had taken in the City and its various events. Recent visits had been much appreciated, not least because they were not simply politically motivated. Bishop Daly was also most grateful for the Secretary of State's letter on his retirement.

Comment

9. Hume's stock is now at record level in the North-west. Much of the support for his efforts has been enhanced by recent violence, building on Hume's obvious commitment to an objective all wish to

see met. He carries the hopes of the Nationalist community for peace, and the good wishes of liberal Unionists. It is unlikely that Gregory Campbell and others of similar mind see the situation in the same way that those Protestants I met, and care needs to be taken in evaluating the local mood on the basis of such a small sample. However, there is a widespread fear that the situation could deteriorate further if some steps to break the cycle of violence are not taken. Inter-party talks are not currently seen as a viable alternative path to peace, not least because many do not believe they will even get restarted.

[Signed]

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1. I agree with the conclusions insofar as they relate to the Irish. I also very much agree with the speaking points in your minute of yesterday.

2. The Irish receive deeply misleading impressions of our intentions and of alleged understandings between the British Government and Mr. Maloney. They believe we pay too much attention to DUP views about the DUP. Though the Government has given much better than its predecessor in taking account of unionist concerns, and indeed tried to take them on board during the drafting of the Joint Declaration, Irish Ministers and officials have little sympathy with unionists. Spring's efforts to get closer to the DUP have been frustrated by Mr. Maloney's reluctance to come here.

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