



- ① Soft knee Dinner
- ② cc PUS
Mr Pilling
Mr Deverell

③ ASDP to Gld 10 1/2
10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

13 February 1991

- Mr Liddle [1]
- Mr Pilling [2]
- Mr Alston [3]
- Mr Thomas [4]
- Mr Deverell - B [5]
- Mr Falch B [6]
- [7]

Dear Tony,

NORTHERN IRELAND: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Northern Ireland Secretary briefed the Prime Minister this afternoon on political developments in Northern Ireland and in the Republic. There were signs that the Irish Government were backing away from support for his initiative. He would continue to try to keep them in play. But we could not afford to let matters drag on indefinitely, and a conclusion either way would have to be reached in about a month.

There was a brief discussion also about the Northern Ireland Secretary's recent minute on PIRA. The Prime Minister made clear that he would be opposed to any sort of concession to PIRA to encourage them to subscribe to a ceasefire. He was anyway sceptical whether they could make a ceasefire stick. It was agreed there was no action to be taken on your Secretary of State's minute.

The Prime Minister suggested that he might offer to see both the Unionist and the SDLP leaders in London at some point, probably in his office in the House of Commons. He thought the Northern Ireland Secretary should be present. The Northern Ireland Secretary welcomed this suggestion and undertook to advise on the best timing.

The Prime Minister said that he would be ready to see Archbishop Eames and Cardinal Daly at an appropriate moment.

Yours sincerely
Charles Powell

CHARLES POWELL

SAB
This seems
very
categorical,
was this
your
understanding?

PETER MAY
PS/PUS
14 FEBRUARY 1991

Tony Pawson Esq
Northern Ireland Office

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