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FROM: RICHARD LEMON
PS/MICHAEL ANCRAM

9 JUNE 1996

- cc PS/Secretary of State (B & L) - B
- PS/Sir J Wheeler (B & L) - B
- PS/Michael Ancram (L & B) - B
- Mr Legge - B
- Mr Thomas (B & L) - B
- Mr Bell - B
- Mr Leach - B
- Mr Steele - B
- Mr Watkins - B
- Mr Wood (B & L) - B
- Mr Beeton - B
- Mr Stephens - B
- Mr Hill (B & L) - B
- Mr Lavery - B
- Mr Maccabe - B
- Mr Perry - B
- Ms Checksfield - B
- Ms Harrison - B
- Ms Mapstone - B
- Mr Whysall - B
- Mr Holmes, No 10
- Mr Budd, Cabinet Office
- Mr Lamont, RID - B

DESK IMMEDIATE

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

SECRETARY OF STATE AND TANAISTE'S MEETING WITH SENATOR MITCHELL,
GENERAL DE CHASTELAIN AND MR HOLKERI IN STORMONT HOUSE
ON 9 JUNE 1996

Those present -

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Secretary of State | Tanaiste | George Mitchell |
| Michael Ancram | Mr O hUiginn | General de Chastelain |
| Sir David Fell | Mr Donohue | Mr Holkeri |
| Mr Bell | Mr Cooney | Ms Pope |
| Mr Hill | | Mr Pozorski |
| Mr Lemon | | Mr Angell |
| | | Ms Feodorff |

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The Secretary of State hosted a meeting in Stormont House with the Tanaiste, Senator Mitchell, General de Chastelain and Mr Holkeri in Stormont House, Belfast. The meeting was an opportunity to express the thanks of both Governments to the Mitchell team for their contribution in the past and to welcome them formally on the afternoon before all-party negotiations. The full meeting lasted about one hour fifteen minutes and was followed by a discussion with the Irish side on detailed arrangements and choreography for Day 1 of negotiations.

Detail

2. The Tanaiste began by welcoming the party formally to Belfast. We were about to enter uncharted waters and it would be useful to discuss some of the arrangements for tomorrow. The Secretary of State endorsed the Tanaiste's welcome and expressed his thanks for the team's acceptance of his invitation to take part.

3. Mitchell began by saying that he had met Trimble with Empey and Taylor today in Belfast. The meeting had lasted about one hour and he described it as "civil but direct". Two points were raised. The first more minor point related to the Senator's independence and Trimble asked Mitchell not to utilise anyone on his staff associated with either Government and to maintain his independence. Mitchell said that Taylor had called him "the ringleader of the American Mafia" and had referred to the "baggage you carry" but he thought the overall message was that although they had reservations they did not really object to his Chairmanship.

4. The second more significant point related to the Ulster Unionists real concerns about the agenda and proceedings. The Ulster Unionists felt that the agenda had been "hijacked (a term used a number of times) by the two Governments" and that it was for participants to make decisions not have them imposed by Governments. Trimble had said that if they did not get an understanding he would "kick over the table" at an early stage. He added that if he thought Paisley was to do the same, he would do it before him. Mitchell said he thought Trimble was not bluffing.

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5. The Ulster Unionists reported that McCartney was under Paisley domination and Paisley had wanted to bring the Ulster Unionists into a broader Unionist alliance. Trimble had rejected this. Mitchell reported that Trimble had wanted decommissioning high on the Agenda. It was Mitchell's view that he was left with the impression that the "kicking over the table" would happen one way or the other but added that he viewed an early discussion with Trimble, ie before 2 pm on 10 June, highly desirable.

6. The Secretary of State noted that it was for Governments to delegate Chairmanships to whoever they chose but there was a practical question of how to deal with Trimble's kicking tables.

7. Mitchell said that Trimble had said he had written to the Secretary of State recently about Agendas but had not received a reply. The Secretary of State said that he had responded and a letter was issued on 7 June. Michael Ancram said he had seen Trimble recently and taken him through the Agenda. Trimble had been offered two further meetings with the Minister and another by the Secretary of State. On all of these occasions Trimble's office had said he was too busy. Therefore to say that he had not been given the chance to discuss the Agenda was factually incorrect.

8. Mitchell repeated that he thought it was better to let Trimble have his say before Talks began and then to get on with the process. To do otherwise would be to give him further justification for disrupting proceedings.

9. O'hUiginn said that he believed the stakes were high for Trimble and for him to walk away at this stage would be unacceptable to those in his own community. The two Governments had worked together and come this far and had a right to delegate to Chairmen. He said that if Trimble insisted on his line and there was no agreement the Governments could proceed on the basis of one Strand only - Strand III, which would be a sobering thought for Trimble. The Secretary of State said that Strand I was technically available, but not acceptable to SDLP. Joint Chairmanship was also available but was not acceptable to Unionists.

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10. The Tanaiste moved on to the management of 10 June and asked if Parties might be expected to be more disciplined in the presence of the two Prime Ministers. The Secretary of State said that he did not think so and indeed were likely to use the opportunity to make some disobliging remarks to the Taoiseach. Michael Ancram said that there was every indication that Paisley would be coming and if he did he might come to walk out.

11. There followed some discussion on handling of the media. The Secretary of State said that he had taken the view that as in certain European and NATO meetings cameras could be allowed to take shots of the delegates seated but then withdraw while the two Prime Ministers made their statements. The reasoning behind this approach was to avoid images of a protest during a Prime Ministerial address and of Sinn Fein protesters at the gates of Castle Buildings being televised round the world. The Tanaiste said he understood the argument but it was unfortunate that such an event could not be shown. Michael Ancram said that there could follow immediately after the Prime Ministerial addresses a press conference in a more controlled environment. The Tanaiste asked if it was possible to commission a camera which was the property of the Talks with a view to editing, thereby preventing shots of disruptive scenes. (Mr Wood entered the meeting at this stage.) He said that it would not be possible to do this with one camera and two or three cameras would be required to capture general scene-setting. It was his professional advice that the product from one camera after editing would be of a low standard. In addition, the resources in Northern Ireland had been fully stretched and at this short notice it was not possible to acquire the necessary technical facilities. Mr Wood said that he could not support the use of one camera to edit the proceedings and so interfere with the output, although he said he accepted coverage was not without risk. The view from No 10 had been that provided they understood the logistics they were relaxed about televising the Prime Minister's presentations.

12. The Secretary of State repeated that he felt that it was a real inducement to trouble. Michael Ancram said that if given the chance to demonstrate on TV he felt some would take it. It was

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agreed that shots could be taken of delegates taking their seats and that sound (with visual if possible) be provided to Senator Mitchell's room.

13. On choreography for Day 1, the Secretary of State said that we wanted to minimise any possibility of a Sinn Fein PR coup and it was HMG's intention to have the Sinn Fein delegation met and then invited into Castle Buildings. There they would be given a message from the Government saying that they would not be invited into Talks without an unequivocal restoration of the cease-fire. They would not be permitted to go anywhere else in the building. The Tanaiste agreed that it was better to bring them in and to be met by officials. Mr O hUiginn said that he hoped they would hand in a letter of protest and he thought Adams would not do more.

14. The Secretary of State said that the Prime Minister was due to arrive about 1300 hrs and would have lunch in Castle Buildings. He thought the two Prime Ministers would want a brief word with Senator Mitchell and his team. Mitchell said that he was happy to do whatever was convenient to the Prime Ministers. He said he would go into his office, have lunch and when required would meet the Prime Ministers adding that he was happy to "stay in there while you guys get us elected".

15. There was some discussion about holidays and the Secretary of State referred to the holiday at 12 July adding that we would want to avoid any long gap in discussions. The suggestion was made and generally agreed that the talks could be suspended between 12 July and early September. David Trimble had suggested late September. Michael Ancram said that late September would suit Trimble's attempts to get decommissioning before substantive negotiations and should be resisted. The Tanaiste agreed. Sir David Fell said that in 1992 the Talks were interrupted by only two days at the July holiday. The Tanaiste said that we should keep an option of a week in July open.

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16. In conclusion it was agreed that the Secretary of State would offer a meeting with Trimble at 11 am on 10 June; that the Mitchell team would arrive at Castle Buildings at 1230 hrs, and that Prime Ministers would arrive about 1300 hrs. Cameras would be restricted to five or six cameras only at the main entrance of Castle Buildings.

17. At this point the Mitchell, de Chastelain and Holkeri parties left the meeting. The discussion resumed immediately after and the Secretary of State asked the Tanaiste if he had any view on whether there might be an announcement of a late cease-fire. The Tanaiste said that he didn't know but thought that it was probably unlikely before 2 pm tomorrow. The Secretary of State said that he was obliged to consider and consult before issuing an invitation to negotiations but that if a cease-fire announcement was made and the language was acceptable it would not take long to accept. He said he wanted to avoid arguments about wording but wanted also to avoid Unionists walking out. If an announcement of a restoration of a cease-fire was not in acceptable language then he would have to consult. He felt that up to 1100 hrs on 10 June would enable him to issue an invitation to negotiations. The Tanaiste said that he thought that if an announcement was to come it would be early in the morning but felt that up to 12 noon on 10 June would be acceptable. Michael Ancram said that if an announcement was in the same terms and the cease-fire restored to that status before 9 February then it could be considered quickly but if different the two Governments would have to consult.

17. It was agreed that 12 noon would be acceptable if an announcement was in identical terms.

18. The Secretary of State said that if there was no announcement of the cease-fire the text of a message from Government would be handed over to Sinn Fein. There was some discussion about the most appropriate level at which to deal with this. It was agreed that it could not be at ministerial level. Mr O hUiginn

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suggested that this was something which could most appropriately be dealt with at Private Secretary level. This was agreed. There was some discussion about text which was also agreed.

Signed

R P LEMON
PS/Michael Ancram

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