

SECRET

Taoiseach's 'Phone Conversation with Mr. John Hume, 8 April, 1996.

1. The Taoiseach today gave the undersigned the following account of a phone conversation which he had had with Mr. Hume on 8 April, further to a previous conversation about the document presented by Fr. Alex Reid as a possible basis for a restoration of the IRA ceasefire.
2. Mr. Hume said that he had received a new document from Mr. Adams. His assessment was that it was OK in substance but the language was "iffy". Mr. Hume also said that Mr. Adams had drafted the document and had indicated that the ascendancy in the IRA was on his side in looking for a ceasefire on the basis of it.
3. The Taoiseach asked Mr. Hume what he had conveyed to Mr. Adams in terms of the Taoiseach's reaction to the earlier document. Mr. Hume said that he had indicated to Mr. Adams that the Taoiseach was generally favourable to this document but had not made any commitment to it.
4. Mr. Hume said that he expected that at least the ideas contained in the new document would be put by Sinn Féin to Irish officials. He gave an outline of the architecture of the document, which is called "A Notion of a Strategy" - a strategy for Nationalist Ireland aimed at a democratic peace settlement while in the meantime seeking equality of treatment. This strategy, according to Mr. Adams, should be based on democratic principles and the purpose of the document would be to try to agree an approach to the peace process covering constitutional and political change, democratic rights and demilitarisation. It would be taken further at a meeting between Sinn Féin and Irish Government officials. The intention was to reach agreement on a document which could be publicly endorsed by the Government, Fianna Fáil and the SDLP and Sinn Féin.

5. The Taoiseach expressed concern - in the interests of democracy - about any approach which would require all participants - as an absolute condition - to simply sing Sinn Féin's tune. Mr. Hume had more or less seemed to accept this.
6. Mr. Hume said that he would be suggesting a complete change in the wording of the document but that he was confident that the content was acceptable.
7. The Taoiseach raised a concern about the content of the forthcoming British Government legislation on the election. He noted that the Government had been subject to a lot of criticism from Northern Nationalists about the election but made the point that they believed it was a price worth paying for a fixed date for all party negotiations. Mr. Hume maintained, however, that it was only Unionist concerns which were being addressed.
8. The Taoiseach asked Mr. Hume if he would be coming to Dublin in the near future. He felt that he might have to talk to Prime Minister Major about the election legislation and he would wish to talk to Mr. Hume beforehand. Mr. Hume said that he was on holiday at present and trying to recuperate following his recent efforts. The Taoiseach asked if Mr. Hume could send Mr. Mallon to meet him in his place. Mr. Hume did not reject the idea.

Sinn Hume

10 April, 1996.