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FROM: D J R HILL
POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM
17 JUNE 1996



cc PS/Secretary of State(L+B) -B
PS/Sir John Wheeler(L,B+DFP) -B
PS/Michael Ancram(L,B+DENI) -B
PS/Malcolm Moss(L,DOE+DHSS) -B
PS/Baroness Denton(L,DED+DANI) -B
PS/PUS(L+B) -B
PS/Sir David Fell -B
Mr Thomas(L+B) -B
Mr Bell -B
Mr Legge -B
Mr Leach -B
Mr Steele -B
Mr Watkins -B
Mr Wood(L+B) -B
Mr Beeton -B
Mr Currie -B
Mr Hill(L+B) -B
Mr Lavery -B
Mr Maccabe -B
Mr Perry -B
Mr Stephens -B
Ms Checksfield -B
Miss Harrison(L+B) -B
Ms Mapstone -B
Mr Whysall(L+B) -B
Ms Collins, Cab Off (via IPL) -B
Mr O'Mahony, TAU -B
Mr Lamont, RID -B
HMA Dublin -B
Mr Westmacott, (via IPL) -B
Mr Campbell-Bannerman -B
Mrs McNally

File Note

**MEETING WITH THE INDEPENDENT CHAIRMEN AND THE IRISH GOVERNMENT TEAM,
17 JUNE, 9.30AM**

Summary

Sell your shares in "penny candles". Irish Government now fully on board for making the best of the process without Sinn Fein in at least the short term. As a consequence, they accept the need to compromise on the wording of procedural guidelines as far as necessary to protect Mr Trimble's position. Anxious to protect

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"Ground Rules" and dissuade the Unionist parties from pressing their approach to decommissioning in a way which would destabilise the Loyalists.

2. Senator Mitchell initially inclined to remit the issues to "bilaterals" after a round of opening statements, but persuaded by proceeding to table a compilation of the texts (already produced by staffers) and working towards single text negotiation.

Detail

3. A brief but significant meeting.

4. Senator Mitchell (reported gloomy over the weekend, following the Manchester bomb) proposed to commence proceedings with a round of statements from each delegation (parties then Governments) to allow them to introduce their papers of Friday and make any general comments they wished; and then break out into bilaterals (which he clearly implied should be led by the two Governments).

5. The Secretary of State responded by asserting the validity of the political process on which the two Governments and the constitutional parties were engaged, and suggested that bilaterals would not be an effective way to proceed.

6. Dermot Gleeson (the Irish Attorney General and only Irish Minister present) started by saying he supported this and acknowledged that there had to be movement on the procedural guidelines to respond to Mr Trimble's compromise of the previous week, but went on to stress the amount of work which had gone into the 6 June procedural guidelines. Paddy Teahon, in a muddled intervention, tried to argue that the text of any procedural rules might not be especially important so long as the bilateral understandings between the two Governments and the Chairmen were sound. Mr Thomas took an opportunity to challenge this and point out the advantages of crystallising understandings in text in open discussion.

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7. Sean O hUiginn then pulled the Irish presentation together and gave the analysis we would have written for them:

- there had to be movement on the procedural guidelines to protect Mr Trimble's position. There was plenty of scope to adjust the language without losing the substance
- the debate on the identity and role of the Chair was now "over" so precise language was unimportant
- the Unionist emphasis on the Business Committee created no problem as all the participants were involved
- the context in which the decommissioning issue felled to be addressed had now changed: Sinn Fein were not going to be present "for some time" so the current need was to prevent the Unionist parties setting out requirements on decommissioning which pushed the Loyalists out of the process

NOTE OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN SECRETARY OF STATE AND SENATOR GEORGE
The notes below are the Secretary of State's notes of the conversation.

- the immediate need was to get a viable political process going which meant concentrating on the agenda for the opening plenary.

8. Senator Mitchell mentioned that his staff (and General de Chastelain) had produced a tabular compilation of the delegations' proposals for procedural rules and regarding the agenda for the opening plenary. He was encouraged to table them before lunch as a basis for identifying areas of agreement/disagreement.

The Secretary of State said it was a possibility we had thought of in advance. HMG had always said it would deal with such an event in all circumstances. But the reality was HMG would have to say get lost. However we could intellectualise if the reality was

(Signed)
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