

DESK IMMEDIATE

C.C PS/Secretary of State L,B
PS/Sir John Wheeler L,B
PS/Michael Ancram L,B
PS/PUS
PS/Sir David Fell
Mr Thomas
Mr Steele
Mr Ray
Mr Bell
Mr Leach
Mr Watkins
Mr Stephens
Mr Hill
Mr Perry
Mr Maccabe
Mr Beeton
Mr Lavery
Mr Whysall

* Mr Shannon. *

* For Advice + Draft Reply
to No. 10. re: Page 2
Paragraph ✓
on work/Gardening.

From: John Holmes
To: Ken Lindsay
Subject: PM Meeting with UUP 17/10/96
Date: 17/10/96

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From: Angela Dullaghan
PS/Michael Ancram
17 October 1996

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cc: PS/Secretary of State (B&L) - B
PS/Michael Ancram (B&L) - B
PS/Sir John Wheeler (B&L) - B
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PS/Sir David Fell - B
Mr Thomas - B
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Mr Shannon - B
Mr Watkins - B
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Mr Hill - B
Mr Maccabe - B
Mr Beeton - B
Mr Perry - B

Mr Hill - B

UDP AND PUP REQUEST FOR A MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER

A joint delegation of the PUP and the UDP came to see the Minister in Castle Buildings today at 2.15 pm. Present were Mr Ervine and Mr McDonald of the PUP, Mr McMichael and Mr John White of the UDP. You and I were also present.

2. The delegation had come specifically to put forward a request to meet the Prime Minister preferably within the next 2-2½ weeks. I should be grateful if you could supply PS/Secretary of State with a draft letter to No 10 for this purpose. They said they wanted to cover the following issues:

(a) Security Policy

Gary McMichael explained that in the light of the renewed IRA activity the delegation believed that a strong security policy was needed. When pressed by the Minister as to what they thought should be done Mr White explained that on only two occasions had individuals been charged and convicted with directing terrorism. He thought that this could be expanded. Both David Ervine and Gary McMichael talked of a perceived

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slackening of the security force grip on the situation in particular the gap in intelligence. They warned that in the 1970s when the Loyalist paramilitaries came to the fore, the reason that they had done so was that the Government seemed unable to deal effectively with IRA terrorism. playing a part in substantive Negotiations. Her Majesty's Government would be

- (b) Consent forward, during the decommissioning debate, what precisely commitment would mean.

During their meeting they would urge the Prime Minister to reaffirm the Government's commitment to the principle of consent. Michael Ancram confirmed that the Government would have no difficulty with this. With regard to the Negotiations, sufficient consensus applied and whatever was agreed would be subject to the triple lock.

1. Business Committee and decommissioning

- (c) Articles 2 and 3

Talking about the idea floated at the plenary yesterday that During the negotiations the Government would need to put pressure on the Irish government to make changes to Articles 2 and 3 of their Constitution. The Minister confirmed that, as the Framework Document showed, the Irish government have said that they will change Articles 2 and 3 to be consistent with what is agreed in the Negotiations. Mr Ervine stressed that as Her Majesty's Government is a participant in the Negotiations also it should look to giving a commitment in Strand Three to ensure that these changes are made.

They mentioned, as before, the issue of prisoners and

- (d) Substantive Negotiations r's comments and the media hype surrounding it. This led to high hopes on the part of the

The delegation wanted to reinforce that the UDP and the PUP should not be left out of substantive negotiations. Some parties had been saying that it would be necessary for them to do some initial decommissioning before entering substantive negotiations in order to set the precedent for Sinn Fein. Michael Ancram explained that what the Government was looking for was a commitment from all parties to work constructively to implement agreements on decommissioning. He asked the

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delegation how they felt about mutual decommissioning. David Ervine said that to him the theory seemed sound enough. Loyalists had always been reactive. If there was movement on the political side they could react to it. Michael Ancram stated that he certainly could see the UDP/PUP playing a part in substantive Negotiations. Her Majesty's Government would be putting forward, during the decommissioning debate, what precisely commitment would mean.

Other Matters

The delegation made other points during their meeting with the Minister.

1. Business Committee and decommissioning

Talking about the idea floated at the plenary yesterday that the question of how the address to decommissioning would proceed should be referred to the Business Committee Mr Ervine said he was dubious, although he accepted it could well be his paranoia that anything put forward by the UKUP or DUP would be unacceptable. You explained that it had worked well during the 1992 Talks.

2. Prisoners

They mentioned, as before, the issue of prisoners and specifically Andrew Hunter's comments and the media hype surrounding it. This led to high hopes on the part of the prisoners and if it did not deliver the parties got the blame. This had been reinforced by the Shadow Secretary. They wondered if this was some policy option being floated by Mr Hunter. The Minister explained that prisoners was not a matter for him but he suspected that the Secretary of State may have spoken to Mr Hunter. He undertook to pass on their comments.

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3. Personal Protection

Mr Ervine stated that various people had need of urgent personal protection. The Minister assured him that this was being looked at as a matter of urgency.

4. Mr Ervine also explained that certain release papers were being delayed. The reason given to him was that the Secretary of State was busy. (Latest from Mr Kyle is that release papers are expected but not yet received by the Secretary of State's Office.)

(SIGNED)

ANGELA DULLAGHAN
PS/Michael Ancram

Loyalists have not suddenly had a mind to changing type appearance. They have understood fully the strategy of the IRA for a long time. Republicans are in fact somewhat more predictable than loyalists will ever be. The present republican strategy is recognisable as loyalist as similar to that pursued in the run-up to the ceasefire in 1994.

At that time republicans executed a programme of calculated sectarian violence. This was designed to provide a loyalist backlash in the hope that loyalists would find themselves in a position where it was impossible to repudiate an IRA ceasefire when it came and would provide an incentive, usefully providing an escape hatch for the Protestants if they did not find the democratic process to their liking.

The IRA murdered UDP chairman Ray Smallwood, knowing that he was a touchstone in the ongoing negotiations to secure the loyalist ceasefire at the time. They, along with the INLA, murdered other loyalists in particularly brutal attacks. Pubs and clubs in loyalist areas were bombed, inspiring a return to a regime not seen since the 1870s. They attempted to kill the Rev William McCreery, and also tried to murder his sons before their executive appointment.

The Combined Loyalist Military Command refused to go to be driven by the IRA agenda, and so it

is today. Loyalists should not let the Protestants off the hook, they must be allowed to win on the war. However, the loyalist position is not one which should be taken for granted.

The primary reason why the loyalist community rose in armed defence at the beginning of the trouble was because of a failed security response to the republican threat. The community was under fire from violent nationalists and left defectors by a Government whose policy was one of containment, not removal of the terrorist threat.

John Major must acknowledge his Government's responsibility to the people of Northern Ireland and engage a strong security policy to deal with the IRA threat. He must also accept that various parties are united in our view that a simple restoration of the 1994 ceasefire is not an adequate basis for Sinn Féin's entry to negotiations. He must make clear what he considers would constitute a dependable ceasefire, and outline the interpretation of the current legislation.

Additionally, while it is argued that the Government could force Sinn Féin open as if they refused, and it is claimed by their hierarchy that they could not be returned again, we must recognise the basic principle that if Sinn Féin were to be rejected,

talks without the consent of unionists being addressed, there would be no talks process, because Sinn Féin would find themselves talking to rows of empty seats.

Mr McCartney has drawn his attention to the decommissioning issue and how a requirement of physical disarmament should be applied to loyalists. He has accused this argument recently in terms which suggest that if unionists fail to do as they are asked, giving republicans a free entry to talks. He argues that loyalists should therefore voluntarily and tactically decommission a significant portion of weapons in order to set the conditions for Sinn Féin. That loyalists should be the ones to disarm for Sinn Féin and in doing so they demonstrate to the Protestants what is required of them and force them to either accept or reject the democratic process.

It is effectively suggesting that while the IRA is bombing its way around the United Kingdom, loyalists must disarm in the face of an intense threat to the lives of those in our community.

I think that the CLMC have made it clear in the past and I have no reason to believe this position has changed. There can be no unilateral decommissioning.

The decommissioning issue is largely about commitment and

good faith. It is obviously unacceptable that democratic politicians should be expected to have to sit around a table with people who are trying to kill them or who if they do not reach their political

goal they will resort to violence. The question also necessarily is raised about the commitment of

in any way the loyalists are perceived by the majority of the IRA. The question also necessarily is raised about the commitment of

clearly demonstrated. For follow unionists to argue for acceptance for a failure to unilaterally disarm is to deny the real politics of the situation and to deliberately weaken unionism within the negotiation process.

Loyalist paramilitaries do not threaten the course of negotiations with violence nor do they threaten the democratic rights of the people. Loyalist possession of arms does not impact in any way upon the course or substance of negotiations. The CLMC has publicly upheld the core principle of consent. There is no prospect of the loyalist paramilitaries seeking to force their political objectives upon the people through violence. But that is exactly what the IRA is doing, and for that very reason loyalists should not disarm while this threat remains.

We are discussing the decommissioning issue at this time at Stormont, and the UDP is fully committed to the objective of total disarmament of all paramilitary organisations. The decommissioning issue must be addressed to the satisfaction of all participants and the validity of each participant's commitment to the democratic process is acceptable to all others.

The talks are the only hope the people of Northern Ireland have left. The IRA are currently intent upon shaking the whole process apart and leading to all back to civil war. Let us concentrate our minds towards meeting the process and substantive negotiations and away from the Protest.

If we allow it to fail as the decommissioning issue at a time when it is irrelevant to practical terms while the IRA is outside the process, then they will have won. Bob McCartney and others must remember the real enemy is outside not within.