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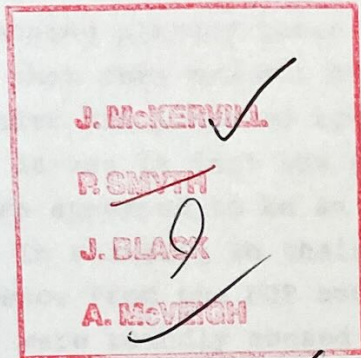
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FROM: J MAPSTONE
IPL
14 OCTOBER 1996

POLITICAL AFFAIR
DIVISION
15 OCT 1996
N.I.O. BELFAST

cc PS/Secretary of State (B&L) - B
PS/Sir John Wheeler (B&L) - B
PS/Michael Ancram (B&L) - B
PS/Malcolm Moss (DHSS, DOE & L) - B
PS/Baroness Denton (DED, DANI & L) - B
PS/PUS (B&L) - B
PS/Sir David Fell - B
Mr Thomas - B
Mr Bell - B
Mr Legge - B
Mr Leach (B&L) - B
Mr Steele - B
Mr Watkins - B
Mr Wood (B&L) - B
Mr Beeton - B
Mr Priestly - B
Mr Hill (B&L) - B
Mr Lavery - B
Mr Maccabe - B
Mr Perry - B
Mr Stephens - B
Ms Bharucha - B
Mr Whysall (B&L) - B
Ms Collins, Cab Off (via IPL) - B
Mr Dickinson, TAU - B
Mr Lamont, RID FCO - B
HMA Dublin - B
Mr Westmacott (via RID) - B
Mr Campbell-Bannerman - B
Mrs McNally (B&L) - B
Mr Holmes, No 10



CE/10

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

TALKS: SUMMARY, 14 OCTOBER, 10.30PM.

Two themes for the day: the agenda for the opening plenary, and in the margins, Unionist pressure on the Government to redefine the entry requirements for Sinn Fein.

Agreement on the agenda for the opening plenary had been left with the UUP and the SDLP to pursue in bilaterals. The UUP reported in the

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morning that they were waiting for the SDLP to come back to them. A plenary convened at 12 noon as previously arranged but was adjourned at the Chairmen's call, to facilitate an expressed wish from some parties to continue with bilaterals. It was suggested the plenary reconvene at 2.30. In fact it did not reconvene until 6pm after it had become clear that, although the UUP and SDLP had reached agreement on a text, their attempts to reach agreement with other participants had failed. Notably, a bilateral between the SDLP and the DUP had reportedly ended in disarray.

At the evening plenary there was much protest from DUP and UKUP at the fact that they had not been involved in bilaterals on the agenda, that the proposed agenda was put forward by the Chairman although it was in fact the agreed text of the SDLP and UUP, and that there appeared to be an assumption that there was no need of debate. In sticking to their agreed text, the UUP demonstrated independence from the DUP and the UKUP and, in a bad-tempered session, were roundly abused as a result. Having failed to get an adjournment of the plenary on the issue until tomorrow, the DUP and UKUP appeared prepared for a long haul session. The plenary was continuing at the time of writing.

On the other issue, at an afternoon bilateral with the UUP (Messrs Trimble - for 5 minutes - Taylor and Empey), it was clear that the UUP is seeking to have the door closed on Sinn Fein's entry to the talks. Accepting the legislative constraints on the Government, they proposed the development of a set of criteria to provide a definition of unequivocal which would, in effect mean Sinn Fein would never come into the talks. As a result of last week's bomb attack, the UUP reported they would be unable to sit down with Sinn Fein should they enter; in reality they said, the talks process only had a future on the basis of Sinn Fein excluded, although it could not be phrased in this way. They acknowledged the difficulties of

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this position for the SDLP, and accepted the need to avoid language which would make the situation impossible for them. The sorts of criteria they mentioned included the wording of any announcement, a time-scale (six monthly reviews), and a complete end to punishment attacks.

(Signed)

JULIE MAPSTONE

Mr Thomas - 3
Mr Steele - 3
Mr Ball - 3
Mr Ray - 3
Mr Watkins - 3
Mr Baeton - 3
Mr Hill - 3
Mr Macdabe - 3
Mr Perry - 3
Miss Bharucha - 3
Ms Mapstone - 3
Mr Jagelman - 3

LA/10

1. Thank you for sending me a revised draft of your paper under cover of your letter of 18 October to Mr Thomas.

2. I agree that the revised draft is very good and sets out a useful range of options for Ministers to consider.

3. In reading the current draft I was struck by the fact that not all of the five main groups of options you address are necessarily mutually incompatible. Rather, it seems to me that we could possibly deploy various permutations of these options in order to bring a package which might just meet the requirements of the SDLP and the Irish Government. Therefore (and I am conscious that this is not a particularly helpful suggestion at this late stage in the drafting process), an alternative way of presenting this material might be to set out a menu of options which might be considered.

4. Of the three principal options (ie options (b) - (d)), it seems to me that the idea of 'parking' decommissioning is likely to be the most attractive rather than would the alternative of making Sinn

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