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## RESTRICTED

From: Peter Westmacott

Date: 12 August 1996

cc: Mr Beeton NIO(L)  
Mr Stephens NIO(L)  
Mr Lamont, RID, FCO  
Mr Oakden, No 10  
Mr Reid, BIS New York

## Charge

## US/NORTHERN IRELAND: JIMMY SMYTH

1. I had a word with Mary Ann Peters in the NSC this morning, to follow up the conversations recorded in your letter of 9 August to John Holmes in No 10.
2. Ms Peters confirmed that the plan was for Warren Christopher to sign the Extradition Order on Friday, when he got back from Sarajavo. The Order would be signed "clean" - no linkages or conditionality of any kind. However, as I knew from my earlier conversations with Nancy Soderberg, the White House - particularly the domestic policy people - saw a need for domestic policy damage limitation. Hence Lake's suggestion to you, which she feared that she and Lake might not have set out with the necessary clarity. There was no intention to link the extradition of Smyth, or his treatment once back in the UK, to a resumption of the IRA's cease-fire. All the Administration had in mind was to express the hope, in public, at the time of Smyth's extradition that the British authorities might be prepared, in the context of any future confidence-building measures which they thought appropriate, to count time served in US jails by Smyth (and others) towards the total necessary to qualify for remission.
3. Since he was already working on a response to your letter of 9 August, I passed this on orally to Tony Beeton in the NIO. He hopes to let us have instructions in the next day or two.
4. I subsequently told Mary Ann Peters, in response to her separate request, that the NIO have confirmed that Smyth will not be disciplined for his escape from the Maze in 1983, and will not, therefore, suffer any loss of remission on this score. Her comment: lucky man. She added that she had relayed our earlier conversation to Lake (on holiday in New England). Lake had asked her to re-emphasise that the White House was not seeking any kind of negotiation over Smyth; merely giving us advance warning of what they wanted to say when the extradition occurred.

*Peter Westmacott.*

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