

AHERN

See Smith

- Congratulations. Look forward to working together. Visit to London soon?
- Our contacts should not just be on Northern Ireland. But NI is at a very delicate stage.
- Grateful for your (implicit) support for our recent moves.
- Sinn Fein must make their minds up. I really cannot do anything more for them.
- But signals for an early ceasefire are not good. Will have to move on without them if not.
- Another atrocity is possible any day. That will make life very difficult.
- They must get the same tough message from both Governments.

Decommissioning

- Good to agree on the paper, but still very difficult to balance Unionist and Nationalist concerns.
- Cannot back away from principle of some actual decommissioning during negotiations. It's what Mitchell says.
- Hope you will share that interpretation, whatever your private views of the likelihood of decommissioning.

Parades

- Doing everything we can to settle Drumcree but unlikely to succeed.
- Terrible decision for us. Whatever it is, one side or other will need to show understanding and restraint.

[F\Ahern mrm]