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No. 6815 P. 10/16

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PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH THE TAOISEACH: POINTS TO MAKEClose relationship with the Irish

- This is vital/in both our interests.
- Stand by the Agreement, Joint Declaration, Framework Document.
- Both Governments stand the best chance of achieving their objectives when they stand together on Northern Ireland.

Political progress

- Total commitment to talks process. Best way of securing a lasting agreement.
- Cornerstone must be consent (ie, that there will be no change in the status of Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom without the consent of a majority of its people and that, were a majority in future to wish for and formally consent to a united Ireland, the two Governments would support that wish).
- Want to overcome decommissioning hurdle and move into substantive negotiations in September.

Sinn Fein

- Prefer them in but will go on without them if necessary.
- Have put them under pressure. They know what they have to do to join in.
- Hope you will go on using your own influence with them.
- Gone out of our way to offer clarification. Adams' article implies that a further approach will be forthcoming.
- Further meetings with officials are out of the question for now, following Lurgan and Dunmurry.
- But if there are still genuine uncertainties which, if removed, would produce a ceasefire, then prepared to offer further clarification.
- But will not be strung along. Will not be drawn on issues that properly belong in the talks.
- There are risks in me giving further clarification. Unionists already suspicious.

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Decommissioning

- Have put the UUP under severe pressure with the joint paper.
- They face watering down demands and a decisive split from the DUP and UKUP.
- Therefore require careful handling over the coming weeks, especially with Drumcree.
- They need to be confident that our joint proposals will deliver actual decommissioning alongside the negotiations. Nothing less will do.
- Received a long letter from Trimble.
- Propose to meet him, tell him we are prepared to consider sensible amendments, but that in essence, like it or not, this is the essential deal.
- Useful if we can make early progress on arrangements for establishing the Commission, especially **appointment of the Chairman.**

Future of the talks

- Balance of pressure on Sinn Fein and the unionists.
- Hope we can get Sinn Fein into the talks and UUP to agree decommissioning.
- If the IRA fail to deliver, then the talks could still go on without Sinn Fein in September.
- BUT, if no UUP agreement on decommissioning the talks will effectively come to an end.
- If the talks collapse we shall need to find some other way of continuing the search for a political accommodation, but nothing can be imposed and we would need to find ways of involving the political parties.

Drumcree

- the situation remains **difficult and delicate**, with the mood in both communities extremely volatile. It is vital that nothing is said which exacerbates this;
- the Secretary of State and the Chief Constable have made strenuous efforts to broker an accommodation and are continuing to do so, but there has been **no real movement from either side**;
- no decision has yet been taken but, in the absence of compromise, some hard choices will have to be made very soon; and
- we hope, with the rest of the marching season still to come, with no PIRA ceasefire and with the loyalist paramilitaries unstable, that any Irish comment - irrespective of which decision the Chief Constable comes to - will remain **measured and constructive.**

East/West relationship

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- Broad range of interests between our two countries, not just Northern Ireland. Useful to explore the scope for developing co-operation and giving it a higher profile.
- Let us ask our officials to do some preparatory work which we can review at a future Summit.

Summit

- Some time in the Autumn?
- An earlier informal meeting if necessary, should circumstances require.

Press

- Agree public lines.
- Present united front on talks, Sinn Fein, hopes for Drumcree.

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