

27. Aug. 1997 18:56

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No. 7931 P. 2/3

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Prime Minister (by AC. fax)

To: Tony

From: Mo

As you will see, my confidence that
no had accepted no announcement tomorrow
was misplaced. I do not find her
arguments particularly convincing - I
don't think the media will make a fuss
if the announcement is on Friday.

RE: ANNOUNCEMENT ON SINN FEIN AND CEASEFIRE: WHY
THURSDAY AND NOT FRIDAY

Welcome home!

I understand the need to get you and education up and running hard at the top of
the news and ceasefire acceptance will be a mixed story, BUT:-

(1) We checked with No.10 last week and were told "no" problem with
Thursday of this week.

(2) We have built for a potentially difficult announcement since the
weekend:-

- Tuesday signing of International Agreement to set up
Commission with Irish - first international agreement of this
Government - to start the week with a pro-unionist story;
- we had to fight the Irish hard to sign on Tuesday, they
wanted to hold off till Friday hoping to sign the Agreement
at the same time as a decision on the ceasefire. We said that
was bad for us. The Irish will wonder what we're playing at
if we revert to Friday;
- arranged meetings to culminate in Thursday announcement;

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- I've announced on the media it will be Thursday. If it is not, the media will smell a rat and may think you are questioning my decision;
- we've got a careful media plan, here and abroad, for a Thursday announcement and follow-up on Friday and the weekend, including articles for the New York Times, Belfast Telegraph etc all pre-placed;
- as to Trimble, we are informing not consulting him. His views are, legally, not a relevant consideration in my decision.

Obviously if you think there are overriding reasons to go for Friday, we will work with that. But I think one of the problems over the summer has been the changing of policy and plans at short notice. Can we talk about this when we meet at 9am tomorrow?

Love Mo-

MARJORIE MOWLAM

P.S. We could hold it to 7pm - to give you a clear run at the daytime news!!

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