



by fax
JP
AC

File
July 4/9.

To: Tony

From: Mo

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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