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POLITICAL AFFAIR
DIVISION
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FROM: D J R HILL
POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM
10 JUNE 1996

cc PS/Sir John Wheeler(L, B+DFP) -B
PS/Baroness Denton(L, DED+DANI) -B
PS/Mr Moss(L, DOE+DHSS) -B
PS/PUS(L+B) -B
PS/Sir David Fell -B
Mr Thomas -B
Mr Legge -B
Mr Leach -B
Mr Bell -B
Mr Watkins, M H Hill -B
Mr Steele -B
Mr Wood(L+B) 2 D Smyth -B
Mr Stephens -B
Mr Maccabe -B
Mr Beeton -B
Mr Lavery C H -B
Mr Perry -B
Mr Currie -B
PS/Mr Elletson -B
PS/Mr Cran -B
PS/Lady Olga Maitland -B
Mr Campbell-Bannerman -B
Mr Budd, via IPL -B
Mr Lamont, RID -B
HMA Dublin -B
Mrs K Collins, via IPL -B

PS/Michael Ancram(L+B) -B
PS/Secretary of State(L+B) -B

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM
TALKS, 10 JUNE: UNIONIST CHALLENGE TO CHAIRMEN AND AGENDA

Further to Sunday afternoon's meeting with Mr Spring and the Independent Chairmen, I attach a summary brief for the proposed meeting with or phonecall to Mr Trimble and a draft of the kind of statement which the Secretary of State might make in launching a brief discussion after the Prime Minister's Statements.

2. When I spoke to Mr Trimble last night to explain that the Secretary of State would like to meet him around 11am he was abusive and resistant. I explained that the Secretary of State was keen to discuss how today's business might be taken forward most constructively and reiterated the proposed time for the meeting. His response was to say if the Secretary of State wanted a meeting

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he would have to ring him in the morning. The tone of the discussion improved as I tried to reason him round (without revealing what lines the Secretary of State was proposing to take) but he maintained his refusal to commit himself. During the conversation it transpired that he had not (on his account anyway) received the Secretary of State's reply of 7 June to his letter of earlier that day: I arranged for Mr Howard to fax it to him - I hope that improves his mood - and to take forward the arrangements for a meeting.

3. The summary brief and the draft statement follow the line of signalling a readiness to discuss the latter part of the agenda (which the Irish seemed prepared to do at yesterday's meeting). There could, however, be a case for omitting the final paragraph of the introductory remarks (in square brackets) and leaving the point to be conceded later, in response to whatever points may be made in discussion.

(Signed)

D J R HILL
POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM
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BRIEF FOR TRIMBLE MEETING/PHONECALL

Objective

To persuade Mr Trimble to agree to an approach to the first day's business in which

- (a) he and the other delegations are given opportunities to discuss and probe the Governments' appointment of Senator Mitchell and his colleagues as independent chairmen for the Talks
- (b) it is clearly signalled at the outset of the Talks that the Governments' proposal for the agenda for the Opening Plenary Session can be debated at an appropriate and convenient juncture, perhaps initially in the Business Committee once appointed, but
- (c) meanwhile, the Opening Plenary Session continues on the lines proposed, particularly in the interests of securing early commitments to the Mitchell Principles.

Arguments to deploy

- appreciate Mr Trimble's concern to find a constructive way forward and pre-empt a DUP/UK UP stunt
- believe it is important to demonstrate positive forward movement on the first day of the Talks and that it would be desirable to complete proposed agenda items 3 and 4, and 5 if at all possible
- that would facilitate early commitment to the Mitchell principles and provide a positive counter to coverage of Sinn Fein's exclusion from the Talks

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- recognise the case for allowing discussion of Chairmanship arrangements and signalling a readiness to debate a latter part of the agenda
- propose to initiate a brief discussion on the chairmanship after the Prime Minister and Taoiseach have left and before Senator Mitchell is invited to take over the chair; and to signal at that point a readiness to take account of comments on the latter part of the agenda. Will that meet your concerns?
- as to the Chairmanship
 - those aspects of the negotiations in which both sovereign Governments will participate alongside other delegations must have an Independent Chairman. Co chairmanship by the two Governments would be unsatisfactory
 - inviting the members of the International Body focusses attention on the principles they drew up and underlines their proposed approach to decommissioning; and yet makes it difficult for Sinn Fein to criticise
 - distinguished individuals, already familiar with the issues and the people involved
 - independent of their respective Governments. A balanced distribution of responsibilities within the group
 - appointed to serve the participants as a whole and will take advice, especially from the Business Committee

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- ultimately no Chairman can compel any participant to do anything

■ understand your position on the latter part of the agenda for the opening plenary. The best way forward would be to create the opportunity for you to pursue your ideas in a multilateral format, either in the Business Committee once it has been established or in the Plenary itself at an appropriate point, eg when discussing item 5.

4. The formal requirement for Independent Chairmanship arises at any point in the negotiations where both sovereign Governments will be participating alongside the political parties. The only alternative would be for the two Governments to co-chair those parts of the negotiations, which would be unsatisfactory on several counts. Senator Mitchell, General de Chastelain and Mr Holkeri have a number of outstanding qualifications for the roles they have been invited to assume. They are relatively familiar with the issues as a result of their work on the International Body. In that capacity they have met most of you before and amply demonstrated their independence, their political sensitivity and their capacity for hard work, elegant drafting and fine judgement. The relevance of their report to many of the key issues under consideration in these negotiations has been ever clearer and more inescapable as time has passed. The principles of democracy and non-violence which they inaugurated and their proposed approach to decommissioning continued to be key features of the present negotiations and that fact will be reinforced if the authors of that report continue to have a role in securing its implementation and helping to move the process of substantive political negotiations forward.

5. Those are among the reasons which led to the two Governments to invite these gentlemen to assume the roles described in the Scenario for the Opening Plenary. The Taoiseach and I would, however, be happy to hear the views of the other delegations and would welcome the opportunity to respond to any reservations which may be expressed.

16. It may also be convenient for party delegations to have confirmation at this point and the two Governments would be receptive to the proposal that the agenda for the latter part of this Opening Plenary Session should be fully considered at the