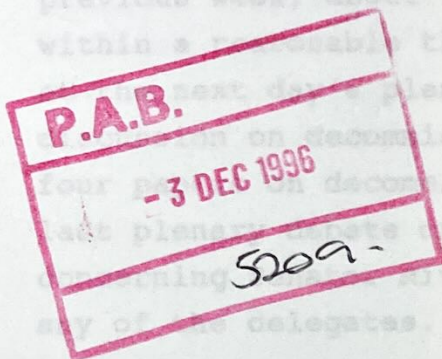


B18

CONFIDENTIAL

FROM: J McKERVILL  
Talks Secretariat  
2 December 1996



cc PS/Secretary of State (B&L) - B  
PS/Sir John Wheeler (B&L) - B  
PS/Michael Ancram (B&L) - B  
PS/Malcolm Moss (DHSS, DOE & L) - B  
PS/Baroness Denton (DED, DANI & L) - B  
PS/PUS (B&L) - B  
PS/Sir David Fell - B  
Mr Thomas - B  
Mr Steele - B  
Mr Leach - B  
Mr Bell - B  
Mr Watkins - B  
Mr Stephens - B  
Mr Wood (B&L) - B  
Mr Beeton - B  
Mr Priestly - B  
Mr Hill (B&L) - B  
Mr Lavery - B  
Mr Maccabe - B  
Mr Perry - B  
Ms Bharucha - B  
Ms Mapstone - B  
Mr Whysall (B&L) - B  
Ms Collins, Cab Off (via IPL) - B  
Mr Dickinson, TAU - B  
Mr Lamont, RID FCO - B  
HMA Dublin - B  
Mr Westmacott (via RID) - B  
Mr Campbell-Bannerman - B  
Mrs McNally (B&L) - B  
Mr Holmes, No 10

*Handwritten notes:*  
M. McLaughlin  
2 Mr. B. B. B.  
37/12

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

**TALKS: 2 DECEMBER: SUMMARY**

A full record of today's meetings is being prepared. This note provides a summary of the day's proceedings.

At the plenary meeting, which began at noon, Senator Mitchell invited any further oral comments on how Mr McCartney's resolution on decommissioning should be handled. Both the DUP and UKUP argued that Mr McCartney's motion should be debated upon without further

CONFIDENTIAL

JC/TALKS/2873

CONFIDENTIAL

ado. However, with the agreement of all the other delegations, the plenary was adjourned until noon the following day to give the Independent Chairmen time to consider written submissions from the delegations on their questions, which had been circulated the previous week, about the right to have motions debated and voted on within a reasonable time. A ruling from the Chairmen would be given at the next day's plenary which would then be followed by a further discussion on decommissioning, focusing, but not exclusively, on the four papers on decommissioning which had been submitted since the last plenary debate on the issue. The weekend media allegations concerning Senator Mitchell's aide, Martha Pope, were not raised by any of the delegates.

J. HICKSVILL

In the afternoon, useful bilaterals with John Hume, a UUP delegation and with the Irish, led by Mr O'hUiginn. Hume, who met Ministers alone, appeared to be still working on a fixed date for Sinn Fein's entry into talks following a ceasefire. In particular, if a ceasefire were called now, he asked whether Sinn Fein could get into the talks when Parliament resumed on 22 January. The Secretary of State, consistent with the Prime Minister's statement, said that that could not be ruled out, provided the requirements of a ceasefire were met. The 28 November statement, he said, ruled nothing out.

The discussion with the UUP concentrated mainly on the Prime Minister's statement, with the delegation looking forward to the outcome at the 9 December meeting with the Taoiseach being consistent with last week's statement. They reported progress in their meetings with the SDLP on the mechanics and modalities of decommissioning, although they doubted agreement would ever be reached with them on the need for a prior tranche of weapons being handed in before Sinn Fein could enter substantive negotiations. The UUP questioned British Ministers on their plans for a Xmas recess. Nothing on this was concluded. Finally, the UUP offered a redraft of the British Government's exit strategy paper, which had been handed to them on 25 November.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

The main benefit of the bilateral with the Irish was to ensure re-engagement between the two Governments. There was evidence that the Irish wanted to do business with the British Government, provided they could be assured of our and others' commitment. Irish continue to believe that the Xmas break remains the last chance for achieving an inclusive talks process. O'hUiginn reviewed the events of the last few days in a sober, but not angry, mood.

(Signed)

J MCKERVILL

Ext 27088

CONFIDENTIAL

JC/TALKS/2873