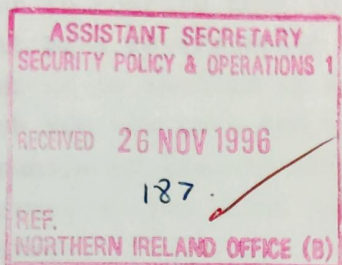


FROM: MRS J O SEAR
IPL DIVISION
25 NOVEMBER 1996

51/023

URGENT - DESK IMMEDIATE

MR STEPHENS - B



cc PS/Secretary of State (L&B) - B
PS/Michael Ancram (L,B&DENI) - B
PS/Sir John Wheeler (L&B) - B
PS/Baroness Denton (L,B,DED) B/F
PS/PUS (L&B) - B
PS/Sir David Fell - B
Mr Steele - B
Mr Thomas (L&B) - B
Mr Bell - B
Mr Leach - B
Mr Watkins - B
Mr Wood (L&B) - B
Mr Cornick - B
Mr Hill (L&B) - B
Mr Maccabe - B
Mr Perry - B
Miss Jude - B
Mr Brearley - B
Ms Bharucha
Mrs Mapstone
Mr Whysall (L&B) - B
HMA Dublin - B
Mrs Collins, Cabinet Office - F
Mr Westmacott - F
Mr Lamont, RID FCO - B
Mr Campbell-Bannerman - B

c (A)

HUME ADAMS - PUBLICATION HANDLING PLAN

The Prime Minister's letters to the Taoiseach and Mr Hume at the weekend suggested that the Government's statement will be published before the end of this month. This minute suggests a possible handling plan which you, Mrs Mapstone and I discussed briefly earlier this afternoon. It forms the agenda for a meeting on the video conference link tomorrow morning 26 November at 10 am to which interested parties are invited to attend.

Bull point briefing on the key messages and defensive lines to take have been circulated today by Mrs Mapstone.

Status of the announcement

We have first assumed that there will be **no requirement** for the Government to make an oral statement to the House. We are assuming therefore that we will have a statement made by the Prime Minister, circulated by No. 10 as a press announcement. Private Office may wish to confirm that this will be the case with No. 10. Since this will be a re-statement of Government policy, we will need to ensure that it is handled in a low key, but nonetheless effective manner with key contacts and opinion formers in the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland and the United States being brought into the picture at the right time. This suggests the following course of action:

a. The day before

- i. The day before the statement is published the following need be informed. Those marked * will also need to be sent a copy if they are not already in possession of one.

The Irish

- The Taoiseach [via officials]
- The Secretariat [by Mr Bell]

- ii. NI Committee members [via a letter from the Secretary of State];

- iii. Mr Hume [? by the Prime Minister, Secretary of State]

- * iv. Mr Trimble [? by the Secretary of State]

- v. Lord Alderdice on a personal basis [via? Michael Ancram]
~~Messrs Irvine and McMichael [via? Michael Ancram]~~

Mr Irvine
Mr McMichael

and vi, The United States

- The President
- Tony Lake and Nancy Soderberg [all by John Holmes?]

* vii. Archbishop Brady and Archbishop Eames [by Mr Maccabe]

In addition we plan to provide posts abroad with the text and the lines to take; key posts are Washington, Dublin and BIS New York.

b. On the Day

There are five different audiences to advise on the day at different stages as follows:-

i. The Talks participants

A least an hour or so before publication we suggest that all talks participants are informed, we suggest that this is by means of a talks paper circulated to participants. either via the PDT at Castle Buildings or via PAB.

ii. Parliament

We felt that Parliament should be handled at two different levels. First by means of an arranged PQ, and second to key contact points. The arranged PQ will require careful drafting - not least because it will need to be tabled the day before. A possible draft wording is attached at Annex A. Those parliamentarians listed in Annex B should be provided with copies of the statement.

I also suggest that copies are supplied to the Commons Vote Office and the Lords Printed Paper Office (75 and 25 copies respectively). Advice from Mr Brearley would be appreciated.

iii. Media

We would welcome advice from Press Office on media handling. We presume that the statement would be immediately faxed to key contacts, in the newspaper, TV and Radio worlds with the Secretary of State and Michael Ancram taking every opportunity to appear on TV and radio in Northern Ireland and Great Britain. We also believe there is a case for a Minister to appear on CNN. The Washington Embassy is ready to write a possible article to follow publication for use in the United States.

iv. PAB Contacts

We suggest that PAB arrange to fax the statement to the Headquarters of all of those on the list at Annex .

v. London Based Diplomats

IPL will circulate the statement to our usual London based Diplomats. Miss Bharucha will be holding a general briefing meeting with them before Christmas.

c. The Following Day

We would welcome comments from Information Services on the need for low key follow up interviews by NIO Ministers on the day after publication.

We will need to work hard to ensure that both the rationale behind the statement and the key elements of the statement itself are explained and understood clearly in both the Republic of Ireland and Washington. We recommend a visit to both Dublin and Washington during the week after publication are considered in the light of the reaction to publication.

Conclusion

There is a difficult balance to be struck; there is a need to get the message across clearly especially when it will be challenged, and ensuring that it remains a low key policy statement. Whatever happens, the Government will have to deal with the usual varied comments ranging from accusations of a cave in to total inflexibility. The handling plan suggested seeks to ensure that HMG's message is put across to key contact points.

Ministers may also want to consider when and how they brief their own range of backbench contacts.

Signed

MRS J O SEAR
IPL DIVISION
25 NOVEMBER 1996

Draft arranged PQ and reply

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland to make a statement about the multi partly negotiations.

DRAFT REPLY

My right hon friend the Prime Minister has today published a re-statement of the Government's position on the negotiations and what needs to be done to secure the participation of Sinn Fein on the same basis as all other talks participants.

The statement has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses and copies are available in the Vote Office and Printed Paper Office.

Mr Joe Hendron MP
 John Hume MP MEP
 Robert McCartney
 Ken Maginnis MP
 Seamus Mallon MP
 Rt Hon James Molyneux MP
 Rev William McCrea MP
 Edward McGuire MP
 Rev Ian Paisley MP MEP
 Peter Robinson MP
 William Rowe MP
 Rev Martin Smyth MP
 John Taylor MP
 David Trimble MP
 Cecil Walker MP

Copies to be sent to Home Addresses of NI MP's

Also
 to Vote Office/
 to Printed Paper Office?

PARLIAMENT LIST

House of Lords

Lord Alderdice
 Lord Holme
 Lord Williams

House of Commons

Rt Hon Tom King MP
 Michael Mates MP
 Rt Hon Sir Nicholas Scott MP
 Andrew Hunter MP
 Rt Hon Anthony Blair MP
 Dr Marjorie Mowlam MP
 Rt Hon Paddy Ashdown MP
 Rt Hon Alan Beith MP
 Rt Hon Sir Edward Heath MP
 Peter Temple-Morris MP
 Roy Beggs MP
 Clifford Forsythe MP
 Dr Joe Hendron MP
 John Hume MP MEP
 Robert McCartney
 Ken Maginnis MP
 Seamus Mallon MP
 Rt Hon James Molyneaux MP
 Rev William McCrea MP
 Edward McGrady MP
 Rev Ian Paisley MP MEP
 Peter Robinson MP
 William Ross MP
 Rev Martin Smyth MP
 John Taylor MP
 David Trimble MP
 Cecil Walker MP

Copies to be sent to Home Addresses of NI MP's

Also 75 Vote Office/
 25 Printed Paper Office?