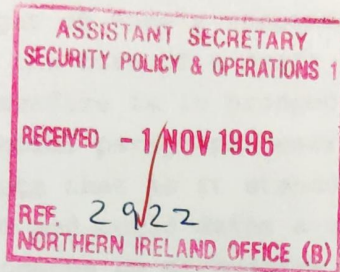


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FROM: QUENTIN THOMAS
POLITICAL DIRECTOR (L)
1 November 1996
QT/MR/71296

PS/SECRETARY OF STATE (L&B) cc PS/Michael Ancram (L&B)
PS/Sir John Wheeler (L&B)
PS/PUS (L&B)
PS/Sir David Fell
Mr Steele
Mr Bell
Mr Leach
Mr Ray
Mr Watkins
Mr Stephens
Mr Wood (L&B)
Mr Beeton
Mr Hill
Mr Lavery
Mr Maccabe
Mr Perry
Ms Bharucha
Mrs Mapstone
Mr Budd Cab Office
HMA Dublin
Mr Lamont RID/FCO
Mr D Campbell Bannerman



HUME/ADAMS INITIATIVE: ACTION PLAN

I **attach** a draft action plan. It is of course highly contingent because our response at each point depends on external events.

2. I also **attach**, equally contingently, a draft statement in response to a putative declaration of a ceasefire, which might of course occur whether or not we deploy the Hume/Adams text.

3. I believe No.10 would like to receive something for the weekend. (Mr Stephens, with IPL, has in hand draft letters to Taoiseach and the US President).

[SIGNED]

QUENTIN THOMAS
PD (L)
OAB 6447

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QT/MR/71296-1.11.96

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ACTION PLAN

1. Await response from Hume, possibly suggesting more evidence of the Provisionals' intentions, perhaps in the form of language they may deploy.
2. Re-examine draft letter to Hume and draft Hume/Adams text in the light of Hume's response. Note if convincing evidence, perhaps in the form of a draft statement, is produced that a serious ceasefire is in prospect, there may be a case for modifying the crucial paragraph describing HMG's response to a ceasefire. (Note that as it stands it has not been seen by anyone outside HMG and could deter a ceasefire.) On the other hand if Hume produces no persuasive evidence this will suggest writing to him with the draft attached to the NI Paper and the text as approved by NI.
3. Amend text, decide whether or not it is HMG's definitive position and despatch to Hume.
4. If and when anything is sent to Hume, a copy should go to the Taoiseach's Department and to the NSC. There might be accompanying phone calls.
5. If the response from Hume enables us to produce a definitive text: i.e. one that we can say we will publish on the basis that in response there will be a ceasefire, the Prime Minister might wish to write personally to the US President and the Taoiseach to recruit their support to what is HMG's final position. (Drafts in preparation.)
6. UUP. The Prime Minister gave a commitment that Mr Trimble would be shown the text before it is published (but not necessarily before it is sent to Hume).
7. There is also a commitment to alert Ministerial colleagues before the text is made public.

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8. If it is clear that the text will produce a positive response there is much to be said for the Prime Minister deploying it personally, perhaps as a statement issued through No.10. (It could be tabled in the Talks but this is less natural for a statement in the Prime Minister's name; and it is important to the Provisionals and others that the statement clearly bears the Prime Minister's personal authority.)
9. Possible ceasefire announcement.
10. HMG's response. (The contingent draft attached could also be used as a basis for a response to a unilateral ceasefire announcement.)
11. Accompanying information effort.
12. HMG meets main Northern Ireland party leaders (at least Hume and Trimble) and the loyalists to consider implications.
13. Thereafter HMG meets Irish Government to take stock of new situation.
14. Ministers ready perhaps a week later, and after initial preparatory contact at official level, to meet Sinn Fein to probe intentions etc.

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DRAFT STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO IRA STATEMENT RESTORING CEASEFIRE

1. I welcome the Statement by the IRA restoring the ceasefire, and that from the President of Sinn Féin [with a renewed commitment to pursue, through a political process, a just and lasting settlement.] [I welcome the indications that this ceasefire is intended to be permanent/irrevocable/to last for ever/the expressions of regret/the commitment to a democratic and peaceful process.]

2. For our part, we hope that this ceasefire represents a decisive repudiation of violence, recognising that it cannot succeed, and that we can move to inclusive negotiations to achieve a new beginning for relationships within Northern Ireland, within the island of Ireland and between the peoples of these islands. For our part, the Government will do all in our power to bring about such a settlement and establish the lasting peace which all the people of Northern Ireland hope for and deserve.

3. At this time our particular thoughts are with those who have needlessly suffered at the hands of the IRA's futile violence over the past 9 months. Violence has achieved nothing except to harden attitudes and set back the cause of peace. It is more clear than ever that peace can only be built on the basis of exclusively peaceful methods and the democratic process.

4. Under the legislation setting up the Talks, if there is an unequivocal restoration of the IRA ceasefire of August 1994, Sinn Féin is to be invited to nominate a team to join the negotiations. In the light of recent events, unless there are some incontrovertible developments supporting it, a dependable judgement that the restoration of the ceasefire is indeed genuinely unequivocal cannot be formed at once. We have made clear that we will need to consider whether words, actions and all the circumstances are consistent with the declared ceasefire. [For example, whether or not any paramilitary activity, including surveillance, targeting and weapons preparation, continued would be relevant.] [We shall take sufficient time to ensure that a well founded judgement can be made.]

5. As the Taoiseach has said, it is for Sinn Féin and the IRA to persuade others that a ceasefire is for real [and it is for Sinn Féin to establish commitment to exclusively peaceful methods and show that they abide by the democratic process.]
6. We hope that their words and actions will quickly convince us that this is so.
7. We plan to meet as soon as possible the leaders of the main Northern Ireland political parties, and the loyalists, to consider the implications of the ceasefire announcement.
8. We also wish to meet the Irish Government to share assessments of the new situation.
9. Thereafter Ministers will be ready, after initial preparatory contact at official level, to meet Sinn Féin.
10. The purpose will be to explore the nature of the ceasefire, what assurances can be given and confidence building measures established. If Sinn Féin are to join the negotiations, they will also need to be brought up to speed with progress so far. Our hope is that Sinn Féin will help to establish, as soon as is appropriate, that it would be right for them to be brought into the Talks process.
11. It is clear that, to be successful, the negotiations must be based on exclusively democratic and peaceful means. There must be no recourse to the threat, actual or implied, or use of violence or coercion. So, on entering the negotiations, Sinn Féin, like the other participants, will need to make clear their total and absolute commitment to the principles of democracy and non-violence set out in the Report of the International Body chaired by Senator George Mitchell.