

18/11/96

13:53

NO. 208

002

MON 18 NOV 96 13:47


PG. 01

Cc: Eo on  
SH

## RESTRICTED

From: V E Sutherland  
British Embassy, Dublin  
Date: 18 November 1996

Mr Stephens - B

cc: PS/Secretary of State (L&B + PROCB) - B  
PS/Michael Ancram (L&B + PROCB) - B  
PS/PUS (L&B)  
PS/Sir David Fell - B  
Mr Thomas (L&B) - B  
Mr Steele - B  
Mr Leach - B  
Mr Bell - B  
Mr Watkins - B  
Mr Wood (L&B) - B  
Mr Beeton - B  
Mrs Collins - B  
Mr Hill (L&B) - B  
Mr Lavery - B  
Mr Maccabe - B  
Mr Perry - B  
Mr Priestly - B  
Mr Whysall (L&B) - B  
Ms Bharucha - B  
Ms Mapstone - B  
Mr Campbell - Bannerman - B  
Mr Lamont, RID  
Mr Holmes, No 10 (By fax)   
Mr Sanderson, Cabinet Office (By fax)

File  
Jm 2/12

## CALL ON PADDY TEAHON: 15 NOVEMBER

1. Following our conversation on Friday I called on Paddy Teahon and discussed three points:

i) Secretary of State's Speech in Manchester

I handed over a copy. Paddy said that officials in the DFA had already seen it and found it encouraging.

ii) Discussions with Sinn Fein

My conversation with Paddy took place shortly before that recorded in John Holmes' letter of 15 November to Ken Lindsay. Briefly Paddy said he and his colleagues (I did not press him on names) had seen McGuinness, McAteer and O'Hare for an hour or two earlier that day. The Sinn Fein team were not prepared to be unequivocal about permanence. Paddy and his colleagues had spoken to them extremely robustly about the British position.

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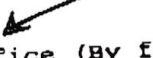
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B E DUBLIN

MON 18 NOV 96 13:48

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Paddy showed me briefly the text which the Irish believed the British would be prepared to use, and which he thought could be sold to Sinn Fein. This was for the most part our own language but it included the proposition that Sinn Fein would take part in an early plenary meeting in order to make a declaration of support for the Mitchell Principles. Paddy told me he would be faxing this to John Holmes, so I did not take detailed notes, which I see unfortunately he has not done. Still I left him in no doubt that immediate entry to plenary was not a possibility.

iii) Decommissioning

Finally, I spoke to Paddy very firmly about the Irish reaction to our latest paper, basically telling him that they were being silly. There was no question whatsoever that the British were trying either to scupper the peace process or preventing a further ceasefire. I was astonished that any sensible person could make such a claim. I added (and Paddy had the grace to laugh) that if I was in the business of being insulted I would have been insulted by their reaction. Our proposals were based on ideas which have come partly from John Alderdice and partly from Sean O hUiginn himself. Its sole purpose was to ensure that the Unionists remained in the talks with Sinn Fein. I could understand that the Irish might have comments and even criticisms. Indeed we would welcome positive proposals. But please let us discuss these in an objective and rational manner. I think he took the point.

(Signed)

V E Sutherland