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BRITISH EMBASSY WASHINGTON

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From the Ambassador  
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19 March 1998

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*Dear John,*

ST PATRICK'S DAY

1. I am hoping for a conversation with Steinberg before the weekend, to get a fuller impression of the President's/Berger's conversations with the Northern Ireland party leaders. My telegram no 460 was based on a jigsaw of truncated conversations with Berger, Steinberg and Bandler at various St Patrick's Day rave-ups.
2. One further snippet involves Alderdice. He told me that he had advised Clinton strongly to focus on the Nationalists because of his lack of leverage with the Unionists. The latter should be left to the Prime Minister. According to Alderdice (who, I think, was the last of the Northern Ireland leaders to see Clinton), this advice was gratefully received.
3. Incidentally, Berger is not alone in questioning whether Trimble had "crossed the Rubicon". A couple of Ulster journalists, who know him very well, told me that they were finding Trimble impossible to read: they could not tell whether he had "a settlement in his head".

*Yours ever,  
Christopher*

Christopher Meyer

cc: Sir John Kerr KCMG, PUS, FCO  
John Grant Esq, Private Office, FCO  
Jan Polley, Cabinet Office  
Ken Lindsay, PS/Secretary of State, NIO  
Veronica Sutherland, HM Ambassador, Dublin

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