

FILE

CONFIDENTIAL



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

18 December 1995

*Dear William,*

**PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO DUBLIN, THURSDAY 21 DECEMBER:  
BRIEFING**

On the assumption that the Prime Minister's visit to Dublin goes ahead (which we shall probably not know for certain until late on Tuesday 19 December), could I confirm the various briefing requests we have already made?

I assume that most of the Prime Minister's formal and informal discussions in Dublin will be about Northern Ireland. I would be grateful if the NIO could provide a comprehensive brief on the **twin track initiative**, bringing the Prime Minister up to date with developments since the initiative was launched, and providing answers to any awkward questions. I assume that the Prime Minister will wish to explore in general terms the way in which some form of elected body might emerge from the political track.

On other subjects, I think we shall need the following:

- **A short steering brief** from the FCO, agreed with the NIO and the Cabinet Office.
- **A scene-setting telegram** from HM Ambassador at Dublin, wrapping up the political situation and current preoccupations of the Irish Government (this will probably obviate the need for a separate background brief on Irish internal affairs).
- Briefing from Paul Lever on the **initiative to promote closer UK/Irish relations**. As noted in previous correspondence, the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach may wish to use the meeting to say something publicly about the initiative. I assume that Paul Lever will be in touch with his Irish counterpart to agree the terms of a contingency public line, plus any background document relating to it.

CONFIDENTIAL

## CONFIDENTIAL

- 2 -

- A brief from the Home Office and the NIO, in the form of line to take and background, on the repatriation of prisoners from the UK to the Republic; the transfer of prisoners from Great Britain to Northern Ireland; the most sensitive current cases; and any other aspects of our policy on prisoners in Great Britain and Northern Ireland which the Taoiseach is likely to raise.
- Briefing from the DTI on Irish steel and on Irish concerns about civil nuclear installations in the UK.
- I would be grateful if the FCO and HM Ambassador at Dublin could identify any other subjects which the Taoiseach might raise, and provide briefing accordingly. For example, are there any European issues which we ought to discuss (bearing in mind that this will be a short and relatively informal meeting)? Is there anything which we need to say to the Irish about fisheries?

I would be grateful if all briefing could reach this office by 1700 on Wednesday 20 December (or earlier if possible).

I am sending copies of this letter to Ken Sutton (Home Office), John Alty (Department of Trade and Industry), and Martin Howard (Northern Ireland Office), to Paul Lever and Jan Polley (Cabinet Office), and to Mrs. Veronica Sutherland (HM Embassy, Dublin).

*Yours ever,  
Roderic*

RODERIC LYNE

William Ehrman, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONFIDENTIAL